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ABSTRACT

Although the forces that are globalizing the economy, democratizing political life, and ushering in a knowledge society promise to improve humanity, they are also exacerbating the marginalization of individuals and the polarization of entire nations. Many individuals in developing nations are at risk of systematic exclusion from meaningful participation in economic, social, political, cultural, and other forms of human activity in their communities. Access to basic education must be deemed a basic human right and the means to empowerment, which is the key to establishing and reinforcing democracy. Adult basic education and educated parents are keys to raising educated children; however, the limitations of formal schooling as a way of achieving universal education should also be acknowledged. The costs of effective literacy and basic education programs for adults and young people compare favorably with the costs of primary education. Widespread basic education is a prerequisite for economic, social, and political development, as well as for personal development and empowerment. (Twenty-seven tables/figures are included. Appended are the following: a list of 10 data sources used to prepare the tables/graphs; list of countries constituting the 6 regions discussed; and a glossary. Contains 21 references.) (MN)

Adult Education in a Polarizing World

Education for All
Status and Trends/1997

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Contents

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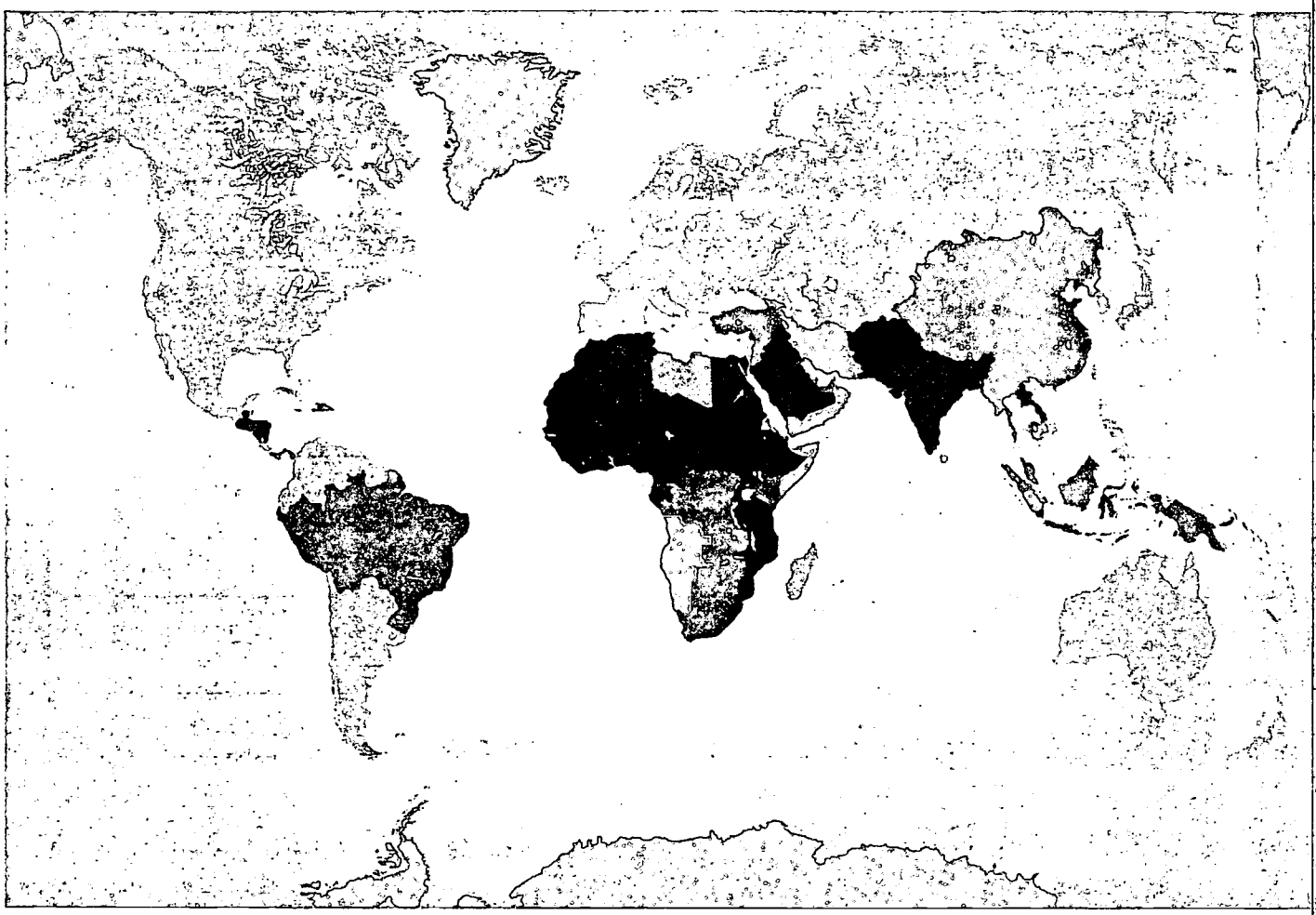

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Preface

Say "education", and most people think of children in school — an understandable reflex, but an incomplete image. Of course children are the primary *target group* for education, but yesterday's children — today's adults — also have learning needs. Nearly 23 per cent of adults today are unable to read or write or do simple arithmetical operations, and many more lack the basic knowledge and skills they need to be responsible parents, efficient workers and active citizens.

A year ago, at its mid-decade meeting in Amman, Jordan, the International Consultative Forum on Education for All examined the results of the global review of progress since the 1990 World Conference on Education for All. The review revealed significant gains in the provision of basic education in many countries during the 1990s. However, the Forum noted also several unfortunate shortfalls, including a widespread lack of support to out-of-school literacy and education programmes for adolescents and adults.

This third issue of *Education for All: Status and Trends* seeks to draw attention to this neglected dimension of EFA and to underline its strategic importance in the world today — a world characterized a year ago by James Gustave Speth, administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, in the following terms:

> *The world, on many fronts, is divided — between rich and poor, between haves and have-nots, between wealthy and the dispossessed. It has become more polarized, both between countries and within countries. If present trends continue, the global economy will be gargantuan in its excesses and grotesque in its inequities. Vast inequality would be the norm and instability and violence its accompaniment.*

A **polarizing world**? Not in the sense of Big Powers confronting each other, but rather in the sense of the growing gaps that divide people into distinct and unequal groups, some being marginalized while others remain in the mainstream of human activity.

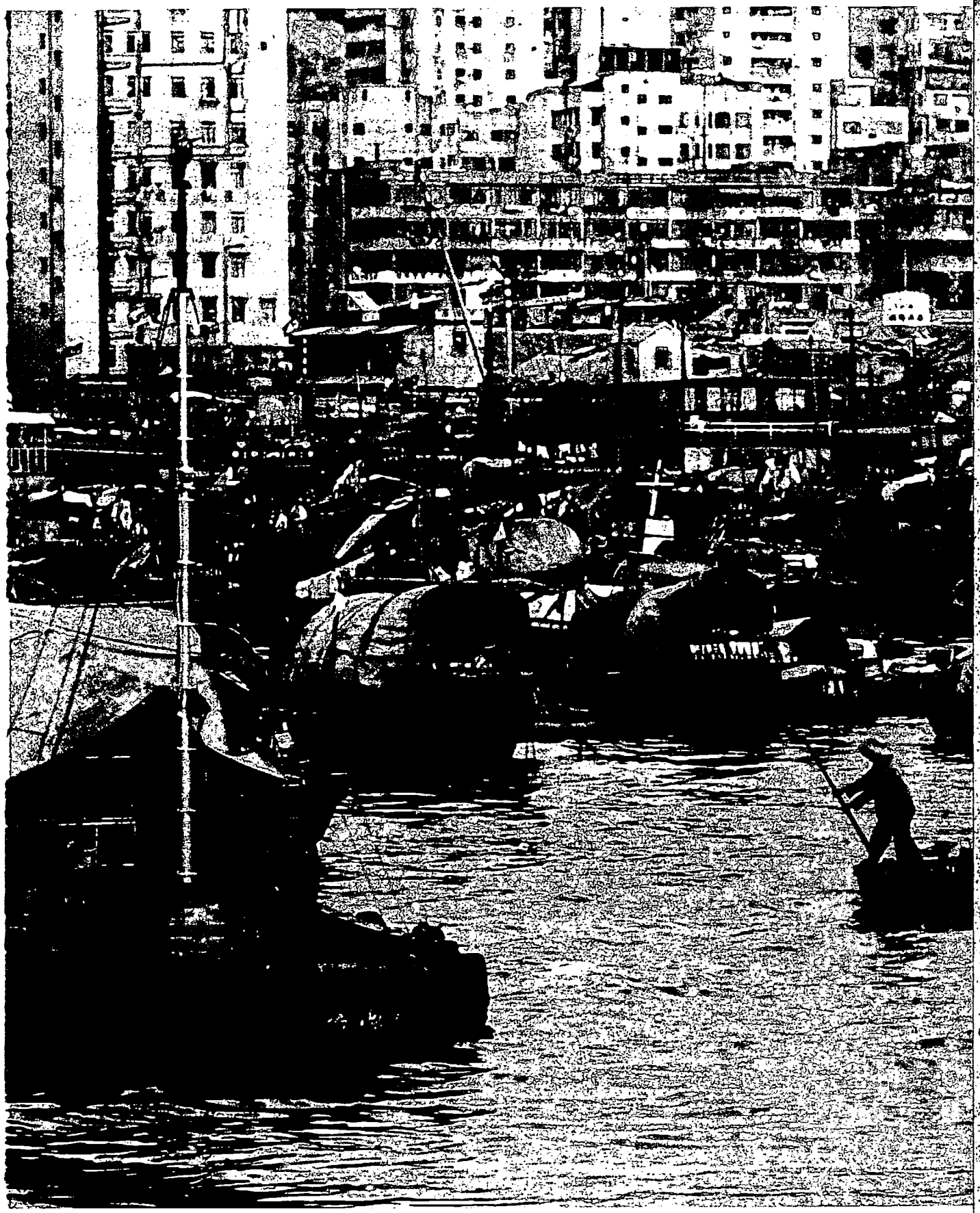
What, then, is the place of adult basic education in such a world? It cannot be a panacea, but meeting the basic learning needs of children **and adults** is certainly a necessary step in any serious attempt to close the gaps and improve equity in human affairs. This report seeks to present the current situation and key trends in adult *basic* education, as well as the rationale for increasing investment in it.

A few cautionary comments are in order for the reader. First, the available data concerning adult education are generally quite limited and incomplete. Most of the data used in this report concern adult literacy — which is an important component and indicator of adult basic education, but not the whole story. Literacy data are largely estimates based on decenniel census data, so the reader should consider them as indicative of magnitudes, rather than accurate measures.

Second, data on certain aspects are available for only certain countries, so some of the graphics in the report apply to "selected countries" only, but are nevertheless considered indicative of the situation or trends in many other countries. Figures are sometimes given for the 48 "least developed countries" as a group, which is a subset of the "developing countries", and figures shown for the latter include data for the former unless indicated otherwise. Also, it should be borne in mind that figures showing regional averages, or even national averages, often obscure significant inter- and intra-country variations. Unfortunately, a general report of this nature cannot go into such detail. Finally, except when specific dates are indicated, all data shown are for the latest year available (LYA) in the 1990s.

On behalf of the EFA Forum Secretariat, I wish to express our deep appreciation for the dedicated efforts of Edward Fiske, the principal author, Agneta Lind, research adviser, and Hilaire Mputu, statistical consultant, who worked with staff of the Secretariat and of UNESCO's Education Sector and Division of Statistics to prepare this report.

Michael Lakin
Executive Secretary
International Consultative Forum
on Education for All



Hong Kong (Photo: UNESCO/Dominique Roger)

Introduction

The society that mankind will inhabit in the 21st Century is being shaped by new and powerful forces that include the globalization of economic activity, the growing importance of knowledge as a prerequisite for participation in fundamental human activities and the increasing democratization of political systems.

The promise of such a society is great. Globalization has the potential to bring diverse human beings together in new and creative ways. A knowledge-rich society contains the tools with which people can address problems ranging from health and economic well-being to personal fulfilment. Political democracy can give oppressed peoples a greater voice in shaping their individual and collective destinies.

Such promise will not be realized, however, if the benefits of these powerful forces are restricted to a fortunate few while large numbers of people, and even whole nations, remain powerless on the sidelines. A world sharply divided between "haves" and "have-nots" is a world that is neither efficient, stable nor just. The emerging global society cannot exist peacefully in a world in which masses of people lack the tools to participate fully in the core activities of that society. Yet that may be exactly the direction in which humankind is moving on the eve of the 21st Century. The signs of marginalization are evident in the growing gaps in income, health care and other measures of human well-being between industrialized and developing countries. Such gaps also exist within individual nations, both rich and poor.

Overcoming the marginalization of large numbers of individuals and the polarization of whole societies is an urgent task for the international community. It will require concerted efforts on many fronts: political, diplomatic, social, economic, and... educational. One important element of such efforts is the provision of basic education to all persons.

The 1990 World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, put the concept of "education for all" on the world's agenda and led to widespread commitment to the goal of "meeting basic learning needs" of all persons, whether they be children, youth or adults. Significant progress has been made toward this goal during the 1990s.

Most of this progress, however, has taken the form of increased enrolments of children in formal schooling. While universal access to schooling is crucial, extending basic education to children is only part of the picture. Masses of illiterate and poorly educated adults are still inadequately prepared to take their places in the emerging global society as parents, workers, and citizens. Renewed attention to basic education for adults is thus necessary to stem the divisive and destructive forces of polarization and marginalization.

This report discusses the current status of basic education for adults in developing and industrialized countries, the trends that are shaping it, and the case for making further investments in this strategic area. ■

***Adult basic educotion** refers to all forms of organized education and training that meet the basic learning needs of adults, including literacy and numeracy, as well as the general knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that they require to survive, develop their capacities, live and work in dignity, improve the quality of their lives, make informed decisions, and ... continue learning.*

Paris Metro, France (Photo: © Vu distribution/Stanley Greene)

Part I

The faces of marginalized people are legion. They can be seen on homeless persons sleeping in the subways of Manhattan or under the bridges of the Seine. They are the faces of African children wasting away from diarrhea that could be prevented if only their desperate mothers knew how to put together a simple saline solution. They are the faces of struggling farmers in South Asia whose primitive agricultural methods have not changed for generations, of reindeer herders in the Russian Far East organizing to fight for mineral rights to the land they occupy, of oppressed minority groups around the world still denied the right to vote.

Threat Marginalization

Marginalization occurs when people are systematically excluded from meaningful participation in economic, social, political, cultural and other forms of human activity in their communities and thus are denied the opportunity to fulfil themselves as human beings. When a critical mass of individuals and entire groups become marginalized, society itself becomes polarized. While the marginalization of even a single person is a human tragedy, the polarization of entire societies is both tragic and dangerous.

Yet, we appear to be moving toward a world in which wealth of all kinds — economic assets, social capital, political influence, know-how and information — is being concentrated in the hands of a privileged few. Simultaneously, a growing proportion of humanity is effectively excluded from access to such riches and from meaningful participation in the modern world.

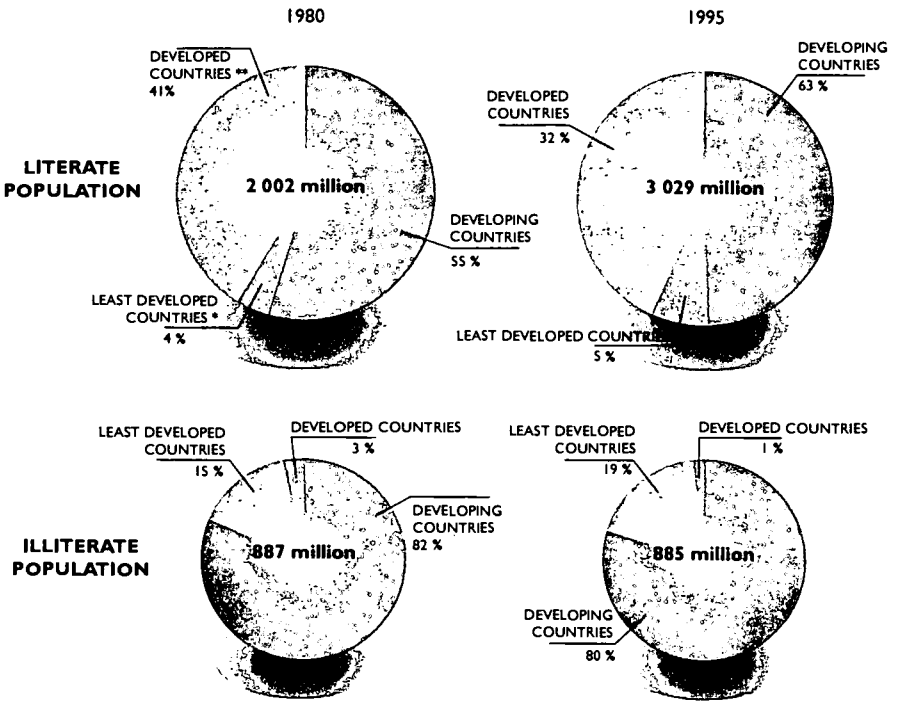
Evidence of Marginalization

The forces of exclusion are at work within and between industrialized and developing nations alike. Evidence of the resulting marginalization can be seen in the latest data on rates of literacy, which correlate strongly with other symptoms of marginalization.

Between industrialized and developing countries

Countries that have already achieved a comfortable level of economic development are in a better position to take full advantage of the forces shaping the world of the 21st century, while other countries are not. The industrialized countries provide schooling to virtually all children and have a rather small pool of illiterate adults, while the developing countries as a group still fall short of providing universal primary schooling and have a very large pool of illiterate and semi-literate adults. In other words, the "haves" are in position to get richer, while the "have-nots" are likely to get poorer. Even in situations where the living conditions of some developing

FIGURE 1. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORLD'S LITERATE AND ILLITERATE POPULATION, 1980 AND 1995



countries are improving, the "haves" seem to be advancing even more rapidly, thus increasing the gap between them and the "have-nots".

Figure 1 shows that the least developed countries* are home to an ever-increasing proportion of the world's illiterate population. However, the positive news is that they, together with the other developing countries, are also home to a growing number of the world's literate adults.

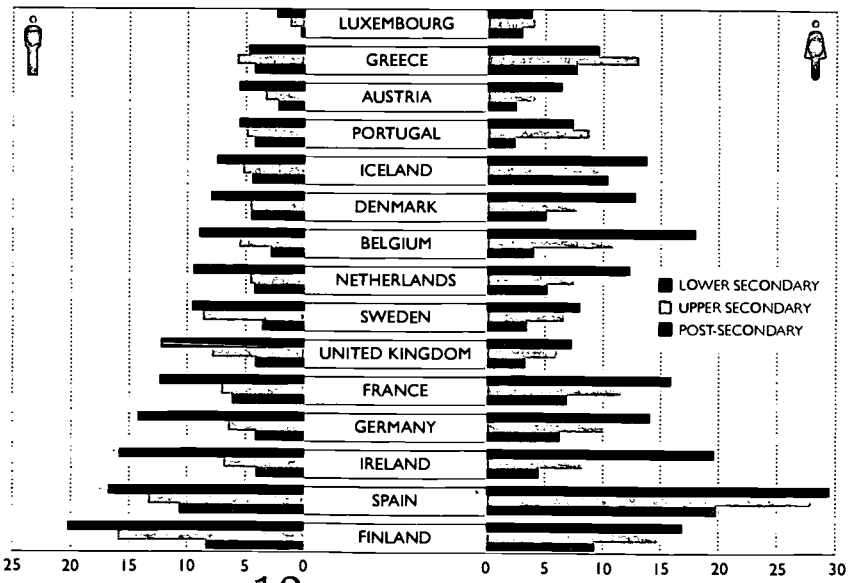
Within industrialized countries**

Large numbers of people find themselves marginalized even within nations that rank among the "haves". The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates that there are 20 million jobless and 38 million poor in Western Europe. In 1995 there were also an estimated 9 million illiterate adults in Europe, of whom two-thirds are women.

Two recent surveys, the Young Adult Literacy Survey (YALS) and the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), used direct measurement of skills to determine the extent of illiteracy in the United States of America. They found that less than five percent of Americans aged 21 to 25 could not read or write at all, but almost a quarter had problems reading texts that required more than simple decoding. Similar studies in Canada came to similar conclusions [1].

The UNESCO Institute for Education, based in Hamburg, Germany, recently published a comparative study entitled *Adult Education Participation in Industrialized Countries*, which presented data from Canada, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States [2]. The study concluded that an "explosion" of organized adult learning activities is now under way in industrialized countries, but that the benefits of these activities are unevenly distributed. Adult education services tend to cater disproportionately to those who are

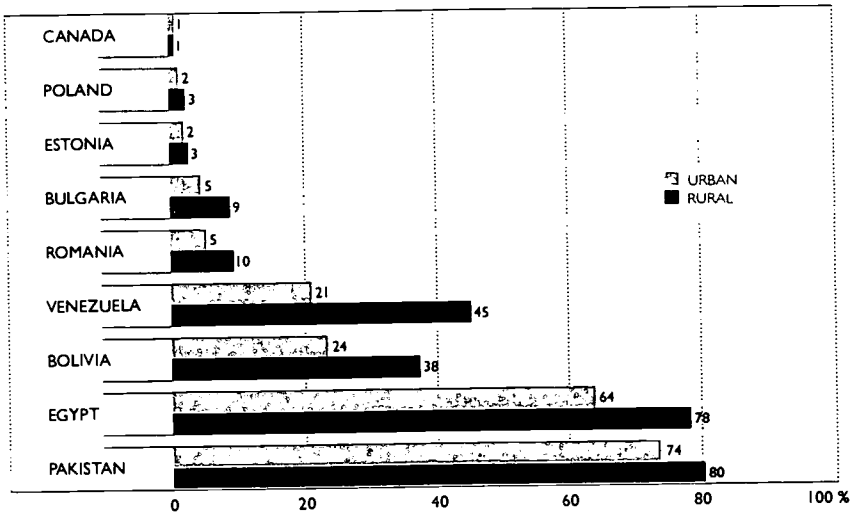
FIGURE 2. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AND GENDER IN FIFTEEN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES



* *The 48 "least developed countries" (LDCs) are a subset within the "developing countries". See glossary in Annex 3.*

** *The "developed" or "industrialized" countries are those with relatively strong industrial economies. See glossary in Annex 3.*

FIGURE 3. PERCENTAGES OF ADULTS 25 YEARS AND OLDER WITH NO SCHOOLING IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS, FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1990 CENSUSES



already educated, already employed and younger rather than older. They also cater disproportionately to men, who are more likely than women to have their studies paid for by employers.

The authors found that a "dual learning society" is emerging in the countries studied. For better and for worse, participation in adult education is a "cumulative social practice". The study found: "Just as the participants accumulate advantages, the adults who did not have access to prolonged initial education will tend to participate much less and will have to overcome important socio-cultural barriers."

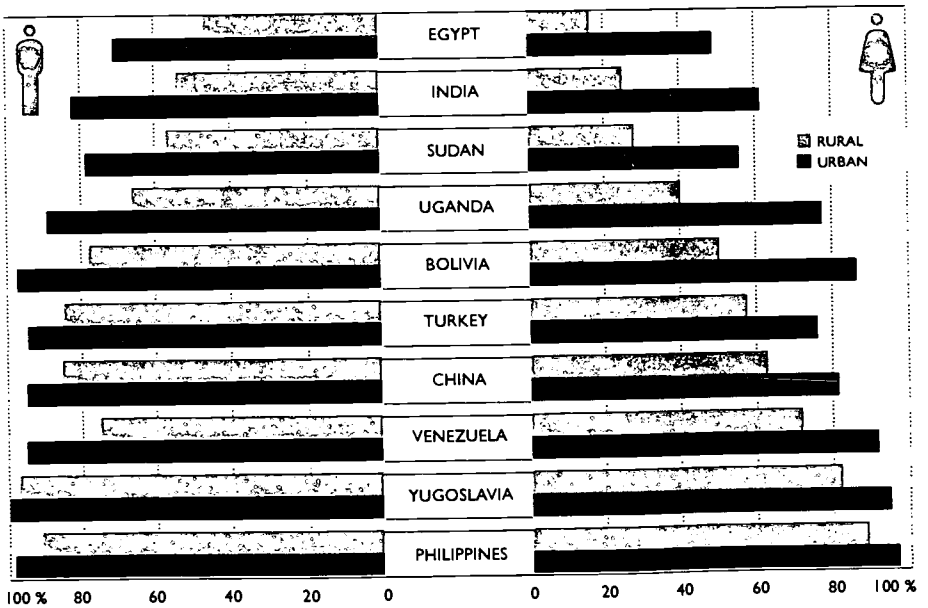
A similar warning was issued by the report *Lifelong Learning for All*, prepared for the January 1996 meeting of the OECD education ministers [3]. It noted that the emerging "learning economy" is now accommodating a growing share of the workforce in industrialized countries but added that "the divisions between those who are included and those who are excluded are sharp and could deepen. [...] In certain European countries more than half of the working-age population has received little education beyond primary schooling." The report observed: "Evidence shows that those people are at risk in changing labor markets." Figure 2 shows that, with the exception of Greece, the incidence of unemployment in 15 European countries declines as the level of education rises. In Finland, for example, the unemployment rate among men with only a lower secondary education is nearly three times that of men with post-secondary studies. The figure also shows the wide disparities in employment rates that exist between countries in the developed world.

Within developing countries

Marginalization is also a growing problem within countries that rank among the "have-nots." In many developing nations economic and other resources are concentrated in the hands of a relatively small ruling elite. Efforts to increase the social, economic and personal welfare of the citizens of such nations sometimes have the unfortunate side effect of exacerbating existing differences. For example, schooling often benefits persons living in urban areas more than those in rural areas, in countries across the development spectrum, as illustrated in Figure 3.

The gender gap in educational opportunity feeds other forms of polarization, including disparities in the status of men and women. The marginalization of girls and women is a problem that exists to some extent in virtually all nations, but it is especially profound in the developing world and notably in rural areas, as seen in adult literacy rates (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4. ADULT LITERACY RATES (15 + YEARS) BY URBAN/RURAL AREA AND BY GENDER FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES, LATEST YEAR AVAILABLE



Note:
1. Egypt: data refer to Egyptian nationals only and exclude unemployed population.
2. Sudan: data refer to Northern States only and do not include homeless and/or nomad population.

FIGURE 5. ADULT LITERACY RATES BY REGION AND GENDER, 1995

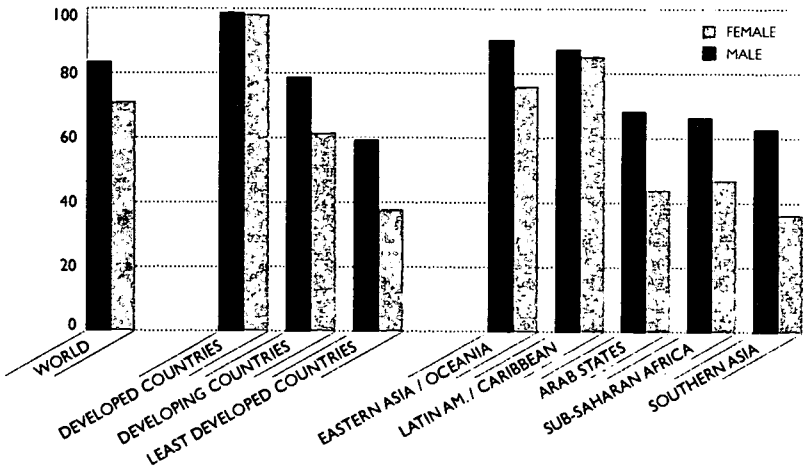


Figure 5 shows that adult literacy rates in 1995 varied widely among the regions, with the differences between those for men and for women most pronounced in the least developed countries that already have a disproportionate share of adult illiterates.

The Roots of Polarization

While the forces that are globalizing the economy, democratizing political life and ushering in a knowledge society offer enormous promise for the betterment of humanity, these same forces are exacerbating the processes that underlie marginalization of individuals and the polarization of whole nations.

Globalization of the economy

We live in a world where not only goods and services, but also people, investment funds, technologies and ideas routinely move back and forth across national borders and where the scope of even the most powerful industrialized nations to make and enforce decisions regarding their economic destinies is increasingly circumscribed.

The climate of this global market-based economy is highly competitive, forcing individuals, firms and entire nations into a process of continual adaptation and improvement of their skills in order to compete effectively. This need is compounded by the changing work environment that favours flexible rather than narrow job skills, flat organizational structures, employee problem-solving and decision-making and consistent focus on quality and client satisfaction. Individuals and nations vary widely in their capacity to respond to these forces.

Organizational changes in industrialized countries have a marginalizing, even polarizing, effect on the workforce. A growing number of companies are relying on a relatively small number of well-trained "core" workers who are highly skilled, work full-time and receive comfortable wages and benefits. Companies supplement these workers with various categories of "peripheral" employees. Some are well-educated employees who move in and out of the economic core, but many more are low-skilled and vulnerable to changes in the labor market.

The proportion of peripheral workers in the workforce in industrialized countries is growing, and gaps between the core and peripheral groups are widening because employers typically restrict investment in additional training to their core employees. Writ large, this distinction between core and peripheral workers has the effect of exacerbating the gaps between industrialized and developing nations. The industrialized countries organize economic activities so that their own workers constitute core employees while services purchased in the global marketplace fall into the peripheral category.

Knowledge-based society

Peter Drucker, an American writer on management issues, has pointed out that whereas the primary basis for wealth in earlier periods was labour, raw materials or access to capital, the *key resource* in today's world is knowledge. This has led to the emergence of "knowledge workers", a category of workers that, he estimates, will make up a third or more of the work force in the United States by the end of this century. Drucker warned that "inequality based on knowledge is a major challenge in today's emerging learning societies."

Developing countries are particularly vulnerable with the emergence of

TABLE 1.

	JANUARY 1986	JANUARY 1996
FREE COUNTRIES	56	76
% OF WORLD POPULATION	36.27%	19.55%
PARTLY FREE COUNTRIES	56	62
% OF WORLD POPULATION	23.29%	41.49%
NOT FREE COUNTRIES	55	53
% OF WORLD POPULATION	40.43%	38.96%

Source: Freedom House

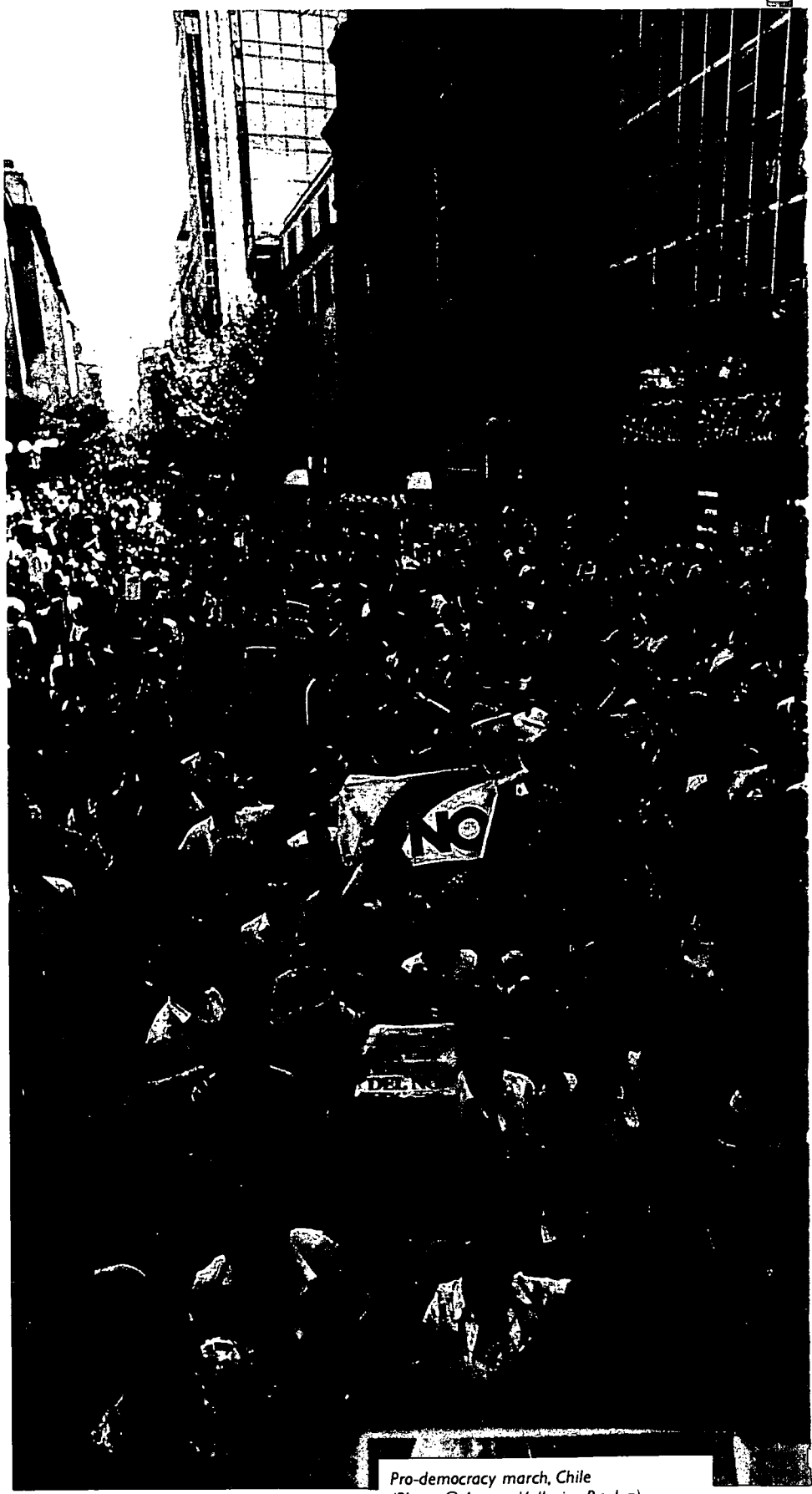
knowledge-based societies because a certain level of basic education is necessary to profit from additional training and knowledge acquisition. The problem is exacerbated by the emergence of new information technologies that constitute a structural break with the past and have disruptive effects that can be as uneven as they are profound. Investment in new technologies can be expensive, thus widening the gap between countries that can afford to be connected to the information superhighway and those that cannot. When it comes to both the acquisition of knowledge and the mastery of information technologies, individuals with the necessary threshold of knowledge are in a position to gain more, while others are left out.

The likely impact of the global information economy on the poor is a topic of discussion at the Knowledge for Development Conference, hosted by the Government of Canada and the World Bank in June 1997. One of its five themes is "Understanding the Global Knowledge Revolution."

Democratization of political institutions

Recent years have brought a breakdown in the single-party political systems in many nations, most notably those of the former Soviet Union, and a substantial increase in the number of countries with democratic forms of government. Such changes have meant that millions of persons now have the opportunity for the first time to participate in politics and exercise influence over their lives and destinies.

According to Freedom House, a non-profit and non-partisan organization in New York established in 1941 to promote democracy around the world, the number of countries that now meets its criteria to be considered "free" or "partly free" has increased over the past decade. However, the proportion of the world's population living in countries that it counts as "free" has actually declined, whereas the proportion in countries it counts as "partly free" has nearly doubled over that period (see Table 1) [4].



Pro-democracy march, Chile
(Photo: © Agence Vu/Javier Bauluz)

Democracy, though, makes demands on its citizens. To work well, it requires an electorate that is informed about issues and that has the motivation, skills and confidence to participate in decision-making. In order to have an informed electorate, basic education must be extended to children and adults alike. In the absence of a well-educated citizenry, power tends to be appropriated by a ruling elite, and the problems of marginalization and disenfranchisement persist.

Retreat of the state from its redistributive role

A variety of forces, including the growth of a global market economy and the discrediting of centralized governance, has led many states to diminish their traditional role in redistributing wealth and providing social benefits and services in respect to education, health, transportation, communications and so forth.

This trend can be dated to the oil crisis of 1973 when industrialized countries of the West discovered that the welfare systems financed by the post-World War II economic boom could no longer be sustained. These systems also faced increased political pressure from leaders such as Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and other proponents of laissez-faire capitalism and a reduced role for government. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism contributed further to this erosion of the state's responsibilities. The new governments in central and eastern Europe lack both the political mandate and the financial means to fulfill the role of the former socialist state as guardian of the social safety net.

Political leaders have often failed to meet their social obligations

The retreat of the state from its redistributive role is often presented as an inevitable development, as a law of nature as ineluctable as the weather. What is often overlooked, however, is that this change has involved political choices and, one must add, political failures. Political leaders have, quite simply, often failed to meet their social obligations. Such failures have contributed to the economic and social marginalization of large numbers of people.

Education as a polarizing force

One unfortunate fact of life is that education, seen by many as a means of promoting equality, functions too often as a source of inequality. Those who have a good basic education are in position to benefit from further education. Employers train the trainable, building on the skills employees bring to the marketplace from school or nonformal programmes. To those who have, more shall be given. As "lifelong learning" becomes more established, the gap is likely to widen between those who have a sufficient basic education to benefit from further learning and those who do not. In Sweden, for example, participation in employer-sponsored education programmes ranged from 69 per cent for some professional groups to 15 per cent for some unskilled blue collar groups [5].

John Ryan, a UNESCO literacy specialist, sees much of the problem as lodged in thinking that views education as an "investment" requiring a maximum return. By such logic, employers prefer to invest only in workers who need relatively little further training to upgrade their skills; only in times of protracted labor shortages will they find it pays to invest in workers with serious educational deficits. Such thinking flows from the fact that most employment-oriented training is funded by private enterprises. "Yet, what is rational for private firms creates situations of inequality and exclusion for the society as a whole," said Ryan. "It is this fact that justifies and, indeed, requires a continuing and, in many cases, enhanced role for public authorities in all stages of lifelong learning."

The same analysis applies to technology. New information technologies represent a structural break with the past. Patterns of implementation are uneven, and those having experience with the first generation of a new technology are better prepared to take advantage of subsequent breakthroughs. Thus the macro forces discussed earlier can combine with formal schooling to form a vicious circle that widens the gap between those who are poorly prepared to face life and those who are armed with the knowledge and skills to defend themselves and take advantage of opportunities.

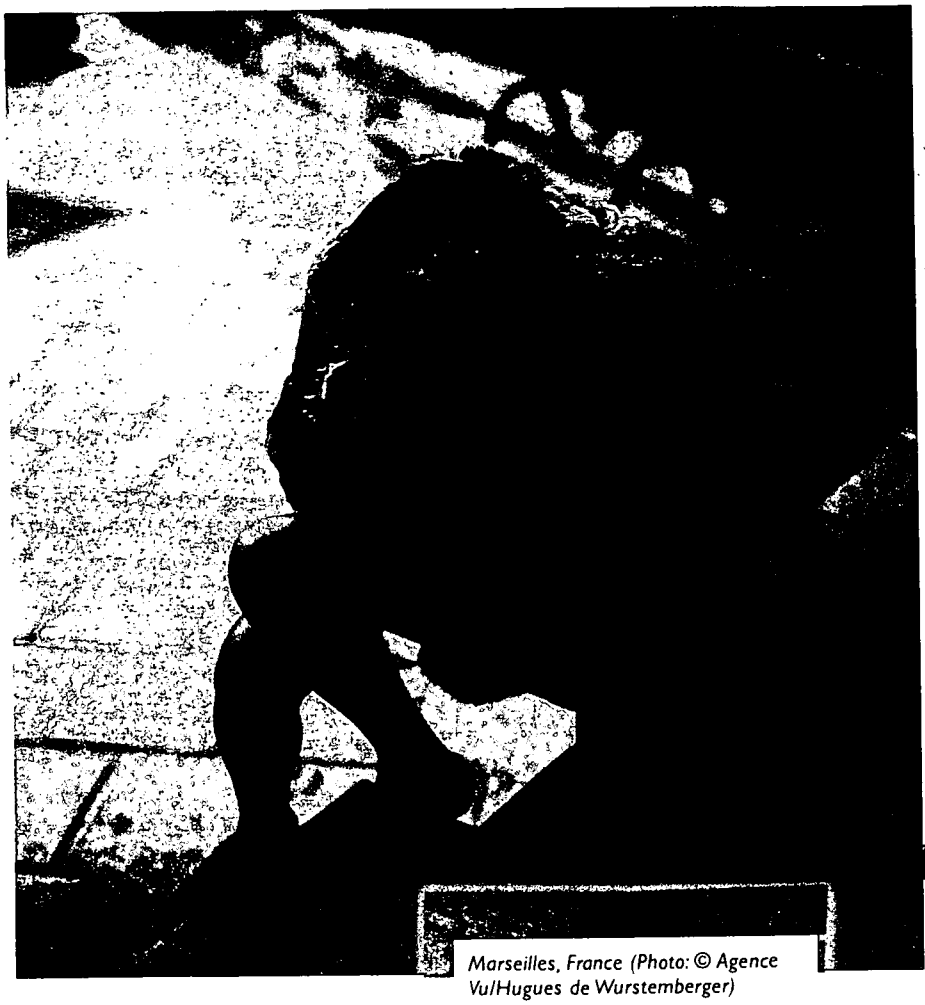
The Dangers of Polarization

The economic, social and political costs inherent in these trends toward the marginalization of large numbers of people and the polarization of society are enormous.

Excluding large numbers of people from participating in the changing world economy runs the risk of creating enclaves of poverty, despair and violence that cannot be eliminated by last-minute government action or humanitarian aid. This is true in industrialized as well as developing countries. In a recent controversial article entitled *The Capitalist Threat*, George Soros, a financier whose credentials as a successful capitalist are beyond dispute, warned that the current widespread faith in unrestricted free markets portends serious danger to the concept of an open society. "By taking the conditions of supply and demand as given and declaring government intervention the ultimate evil," he wrote, "laissez-faire ideology has effectively banished income or wealth redistribution [...] Wealth does accumulate in the hands of its owners, and if there is no mechanism for redistribution, the inequities can become intolerable." Soros criticized social Darwinism as a basis for organizing human affairs. He wrote that "there is something wrong with making the survival of the fittest a guiding principle of civilized society" because "cooperation is as much a part of the system as competition" [6].

In its recent report, *Learning: the Treasure Within*, the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century warned against a concept of "progress" that tolerates the marginalization of large numbers of people as the price of technological and other changes. "The danger is everywhere: hordes of jobless young people, left to fend for themselves in the big cities, are exposed to all the dangers inherent in social exclusion," the Commission wrote. "This development is proving very costly in social terms and, at worst, could jeopardize national solidarity. It is therefore possible to say, in deliberately cautious terms, that technological progress is outstripping our capacity to think up solutions to the new problems it raises for individuals and modern societies" [7].

It is paradoxical that, at a time when liberal democracy and joblessness are spreading within the former Soviet bloc, the very countries of Western Europe that advocate democracy are threatened also by the specter of widespread joblessness and growing poverty. ■



Marseilles, France (Photo: © Agence Vu/Hugues de Wurstemberger)

family, India (Photo: UNICEF/5205/Vilas)

Part II

The opposite of marginalization is empowerment, and basic education is one of the keys to empowerment, both for individuals and groups. At the mid-decade meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All (Amman, Jordan, June 1996), the 250 participants began their final communiqué, adopted by acclamation as the *Amman Affirmation*, with the following words:

"Education is empowerment. It is the key to establishing and reinforcing democracy, to development which is both sustainable and humane and to peace founded upon mutual respect and social justice. Indeed, in a world in which creativity and knowledge plan an ever greater role, the right to education is nothing less than the right to participate in the life of the modern world" [8].

Adults

Basic education empowers individuals because it opens up avenues of communication that would otherwise be closed, expands personal choice and control over one's environment, and is necessary for the acquisition of many other skills. It gives people access to information through both print and electronic media, equips them to cope better with work and family responsibilities, and changes the image they have of themselves. It strengthens their self-confidence to participate in community affairs and influence political issues. Basic education is the key with which individuals can unlock the full range of their talents and realize their creative potentials. It gives disadvantaged people the tools they need to move from exclusion to full participation in their society. Basic education also empowers entire nations because educated citizens and workers have the skills to make democratic institutions function effectively, to meet the demands for a more sophisticated workforce, to work for a cleaner environment, and to meet their obligations as parents and citizens.

One irony of the "knowledge explosion" is that it renders basic skills more essential than ever.

In order to move into the mainstream of the society, marginalized people do not need special forms of education: they need solid training in literacy and numeracy skills, basic scientific concepts and, above all, they need the capacity to continue acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Basic Education is a Human Right

Access to basic education is a fundamental human right. It is also the essential precondition for the effective exercise of other human and legal rights. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, adopted by the United Nations in 1948,

Box A

STUDENTS TEACH ADULTS IN ECUADOR

For 75,000 Equadorian secondary school students it was the experience of a lifetime. They bid goodbye to their parents and friends and boarded government trucks bound for places that most had only heard of in books — from the Galopagos Islands to the soaring Andes. When they could go no further by truck, the young people rode donkeys or hiked the remaining distance on foot. The students had accepted the challenge of Equador's newly elected President Rodrigo Borja to become teachers for four months in the National Literacy Campaign.

The campaign was initiated in 1988 to bring down the country's illiteracy rate — then running at 14 per cent — and to promote national awareness of democracy and human rights, including the right to education. The campaign was a large-scale effort involving the production of teaching materials, training programmes, weekly radio and television broadcasts, and a monthly newspaper.

The 12 lessons in the literacy textbook, Nuestros Derechos *(Our Rights), were organized around the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*

Another purpose of the campaign was to educate secondary school students about the country's pressing social problems, including rural poverty, and to give them a hands-on opportunity to address them. Students not only had to teach, they also had to find ways to overcome obstacles preventing people to attend literacy classes. "In the beginning, many people blamed their age, health, or the fact they couldn't see well at night," said one student-teacher. "Others blamed their jobs or children. But we encouraged them. We told them we would help take care of their children while they learned to read and write."

Results were impressive. Over 80 per cent of the 350,000 adults who completed the prescribed literacy course were able to read and comprehend a short text on human rights and to write creatively about their own experience in the campaign. The adult learners entered the programme hoping to learn how to read, sign their names, do simple arithmetic and use a calculator. They left the programme not only with enhanced skills, but with a greater understanding of their rights as human beings and a determination to express and exercise them. As one mother commented, "We must care for these rights as we do for our own lives."

The student-teachers of Equador also taught their nation a lesson about the capabilities of its young people. "There were a lot of doubts and questions about our ability as young people to teach others to read and write," said one student, "but we have proven ourselves. We young people are capable of doing things that society normally does not let us do." Three-quarters of the students said that they would do it again, and 82 per cent described the experience as more rewarding than the thesis that they would have had to write if they had stayed home. "I have been useful," said one student-teacher enthusiastically. "I have served some purpose. I have been able to teach someone."

As the literacy workers packed up their belongings and said their last good-byes, the villagers shyly wiped away their tears and hugged the young people tightly. "After the campaign, our lives are going to change a lot," said one student. "They already have changed a lot over these four months. We've come to understand the way our poor people live, the Equadorian people. After this we will be left with an emptiness inside, leaving all these people, because although they are very poor, they have touched us very much."

asserted that "everyone has a right to education," and this position has been embraced and further elaborated in several subsequent normative instruments adopted by the world community.

In 1990, during International Literacy Year, the World Conference on Education for All reaffirmed the right to education when it adopted the *World Declaration on Education for All.*

Article I of the Declaration affirms specifically, "Every person — child, youth and adult — shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs." Article 3 added that "basic education should be provided to all children, youth and adults" and declared that "for basic education to be equitable, all children, youth and adults must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning" [9].

Human rights has even been used as an organizing theme in some national literacy campaigns. In 1989, Ecuador carried out an innovative and successful campaign that made use of distance learning techniques and employed secondary school students and teacher trainees as literacy instructors. Each lesson of the literacy text included discussions, reading and writing exercises based on one of the universal human rights. See Box A.

What is Adult Basic Education?

In a formal sense adult basic education can be thought of as all forms of organized education and training, including literacy instruction, that meet the basic learning needs of adults. Adults are usually defined for statistical purposes as persons aged 15 years or older. Technically, the term "literacy" refers to reading and writing skills, but many adult literacy programmes today are organized around broader aims and content than just literacy and numeracy. The term is sometimes used also with reference to various other kinds of basic knowledge and skills, such as "scientific literacy", "computer literacy" and "political literacy."

It is important to recognize that the phrase "meeting basic learning needs" means different things in different circumstances. The knowledge and skills that a farmer needs to be an active participant in a rural community differ from those appropriate to a government worker in an urban capital. Moreover,

learning needs change over time and basic education should, too. Forty years ago, Thailand set out to provide two years of basic education to all children. Over the years the sights were raised, two years at a time, to twelve years at present, and the country is now working on legislation regarding adult education. In countries that have recently moved toward democratic forms of government, the concept of "political literacy" becomes an important part of basic education..

For some time to come, however, efforts will continue to be necessary to promote literacy in its original sense in order to move towards basic education for all, especially in nations where illiteracy among adults is widespread. The emergence of "knowledge-rich societies" and "learning economies" organized around the creation and manipulation of knowledge, information and ideas will place new demands on adult basic education. Furthermore, the aging of the population in many countries calls for diverse and flexible approaches to adult learning because senior citizens now have more time available to them and a variety of interests and activities.

Lifelong learning

Educators around the world are increasingly recognizing the importance of moving beyond a narrow concept of adult basic education. The *World Declaration on Education for All* states: "To serve the basic learning needs of all requires more than a recommitment to basic education as it now exists. What is needed is an *'expanded vision'* that surpasses present resource levels, institutional structures, curricula, and conventional delivery systems while building on the best in current practices." (Article 2)

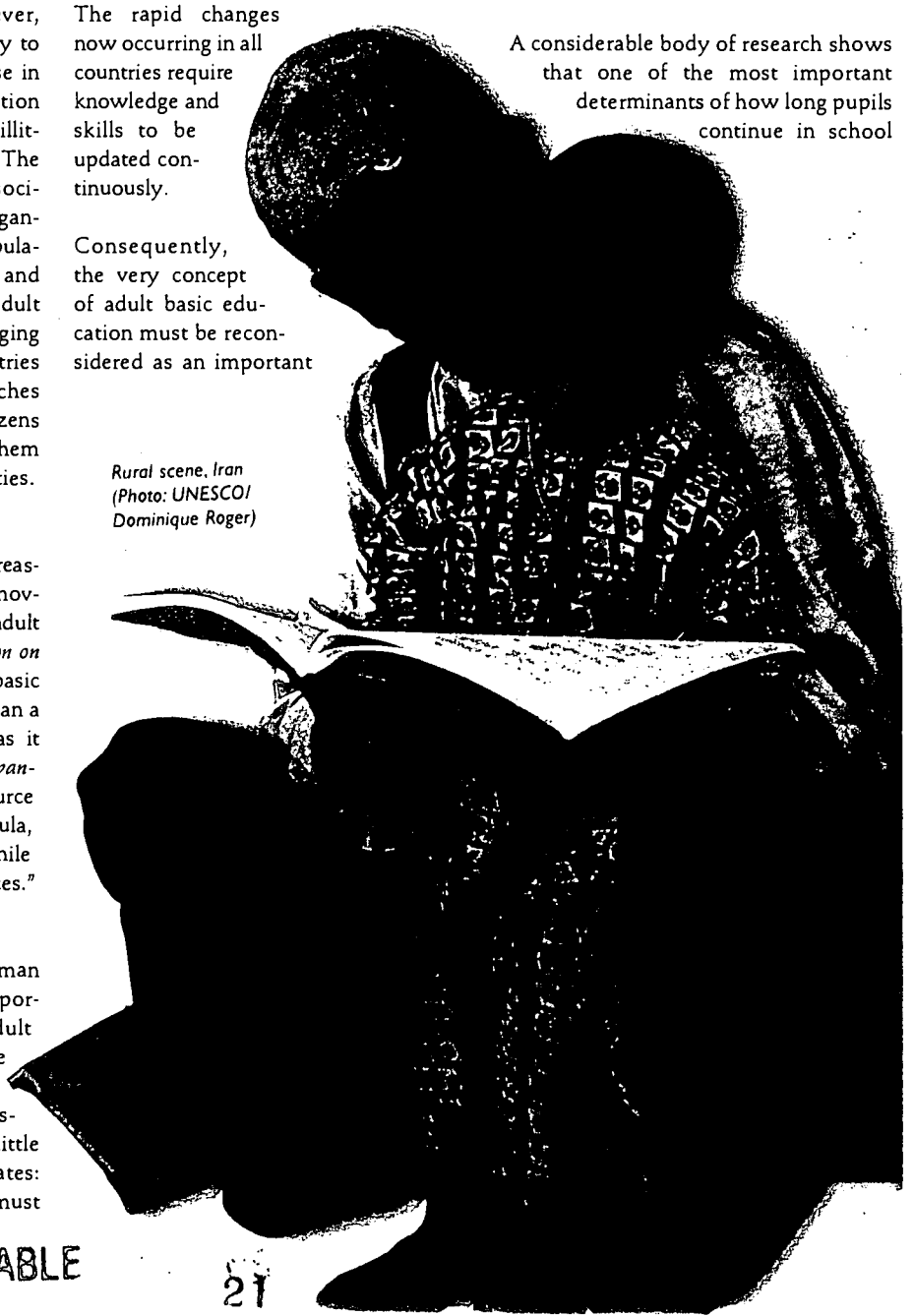
The final report of the 1996 Amman meeting also emphasizes the importance of context in thinking about adult basic education. Referring to the needs of the "growing numbers of alienated and unemployed adolescents and young adults, many with little or no schooling", the document states: "It was agreed that governments must find ways to provide them *basic education that is relevant to their immediate reality and that can equip them to continue learning as their circumstances evolve.*" (emphasis added).

Another important development is the breakdown of the traditional distinction between initial education and continuing education. Learning is now for people of all ages, not merely the young. Gone are the days when one could hope to amass an initial fund of knowledge and skills that would serve for a lifetime. The rapid changes now occurring in all countries require knowledge and skills to be updated continuously.

Consequently, the very concept of adult basic education must be reconsidered as an important component of "lifelong education". While this reconceptualization is probably more obviously necessary in the industrialized countries today, basic education of adults in the developing countries is also evolving.

The Importance of Educated Parents

A considerable body of research shows that one of the most important determinants of how long pupils continue in school



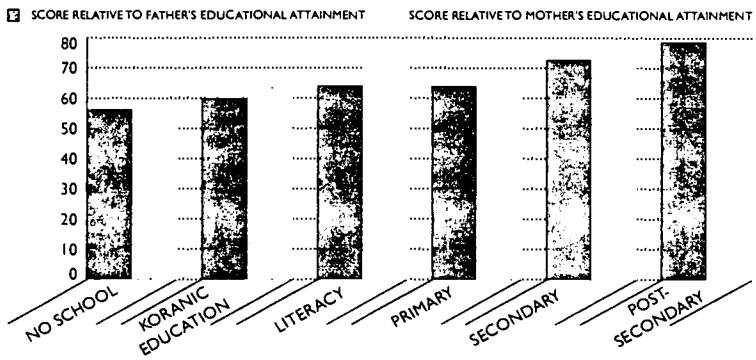
Rural scene, Iran (Photo: UNESCO/ Dominique Roger)

Box B

EDUCATED PARENTS, EDUCATED CHILDREN

Many studies have reported and even measured the positive correlation between parents' educational levels and the attendance and performance of their children in school. In general terms, children whose parents have at least a basic education tend to do better in school than children whose parents have had little or no education. The following graph, for example, shows the average test scores of fourth grade pupils in Morocco in relation to the educational level of the father and the mother. The data were collected through a sample survey of schools in ten provinces and involved administering tests in mathematics, Arabic language and general knowledge to some 3000 pupils.

Average test scores of fourth graders in Morocco according to parents' educational attainment



Source: *Evaluation du niveau d'acquisition des élèves de la quatrième année fondamentale.* Direction de la Statistique de la Prospective et de la Programmation, Rabat, 1995.

The graph shows that the test scores of pupils improve as the level of parental education rises. In this case, it appears that the mother's level of education has more effect on pupils' performance than does the father's.

A similar survey in Nigeria found that among several "home background" variables, the fathers' educational qualification was the most predictive of pupils' performance in school, accounting for 19 per cent of the variance in pupils' scores (Nigeria, 1996). In Lebanon, another survey focusing on fourth grade pupils found that "the lower the parents' education levels are, the lower their children's achievement levels will be". (Lebanon, 1996)

An earlier study (1994) in Sri Lanka also looked into home background factors that affect children's learning. "In general, the educated parents always try to provide their children with some education. ... Most educated parents support learning at home of their children by providing additional reading material such as newspapers, magazines, etc." The study analyzed the variance of pupils' test scores according to whether the parents regularly, sometimes or never "encourage learning", or "support learning" or "supervise work". It found that "The encouragement given by parents for the education of their children is seen to be contributing to the learning achievement at school."

However, parental encouragement for children's learning is not necessarily related to the educational level of the parents. A survey in Mauritius found "Children from families with low socio-economic status received less support at home than those from better-off families. On the other hand, parents with low educational qualification were more likely to help their children in school than parents who had high education levels". (UNESCO-UNICEF Monitoring Project, 1995).

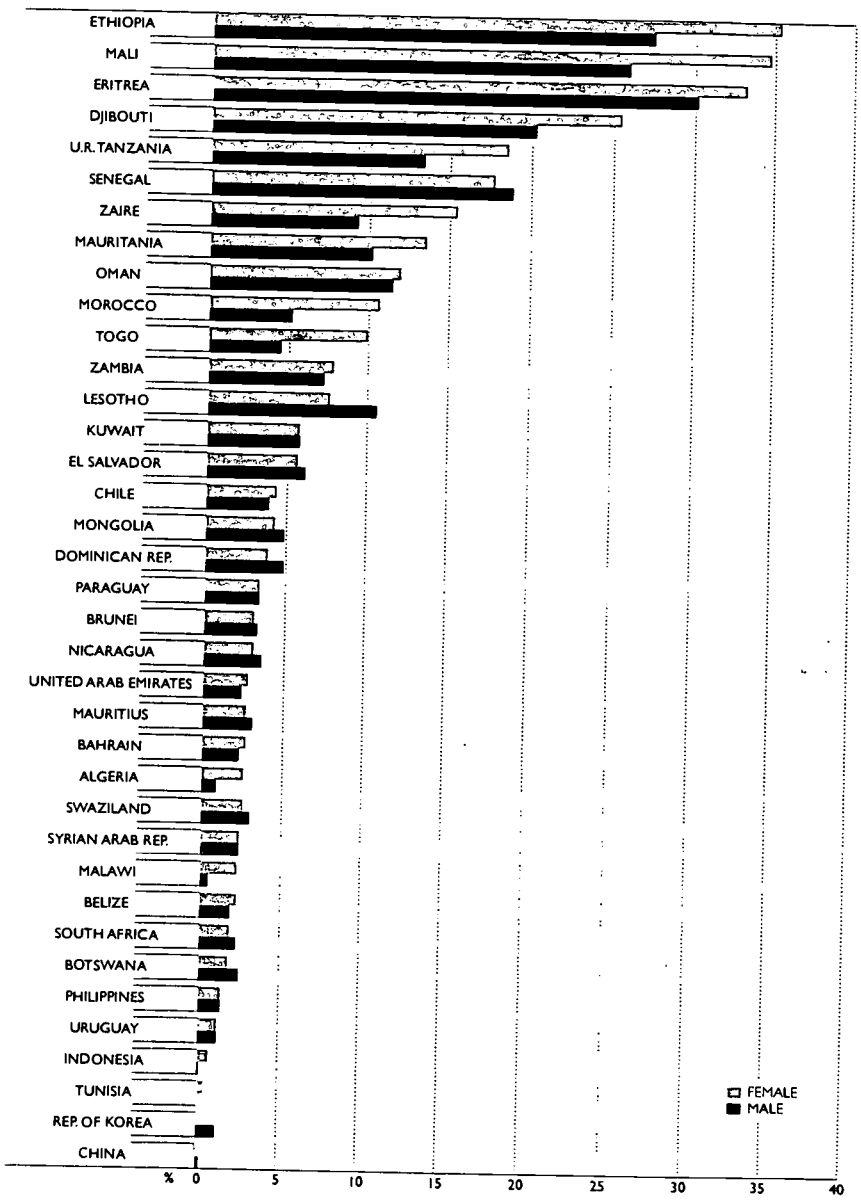
Among the several factors that influence children's learning, the education of parents is clearly very important. In fact, some basic education programmes cater particularly to young adults of child-bearing age and deal with family matters and child care in the lesson materials. Efforts of this kind can enhance the inter-generational effects of basic education to the advantage of children and adults.

and how well they do is the level of education of their parents. Such findings are well known in industrialized countries, but it has also been shown that in developing countries, the children of parents who have at least a basic education do better in school. This is especially true of girls with educated mothers. See Box B

Such findings make intuitive sense. Parents, along with other members of the family and community, are the child's first teachers. Educated parents understand the value of education and communicate this to their children. They are more diligent in assuring attendance and organizing household affairs so that their children have the time to study and attend school. Thus it follows that investing in the basic education of adults — especially those adults with the most influence on the next generation — will not only produce better educated adults but pay off in better educated children as well.

Awareness of the importance of investing in the education of parents is growing. The *Amman Affirmation* states, for example, "In all societies, the best predictor of the learning achievement of children is the education and literacy level of their parents. Investments in adult education and literacy are, thus, investments in the education of entire families."

FIGURE 6. PRIMARY EDUCATION: REQUIRED ANNUAL GROWTH IN ENROLMENTS TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION BY 2000 IN SELECTED COUNTRIES



The Limitations of Schooling

Schools alone cannot do the job of bringing about universal basic education. Although formal schooling has had great success in most industrialized nations, they still have large pockets of illiterate and poorly educated people. Figure 6 shows the growth in enrolments that would be required to achieve universal primary education by the year 2000 in selected countries. While such a goal is clearly realistic in many countries, there are others that will be dealing with substantial numbers of unschooled children for many years to come. These children will enter the pool of adult illiterates and become a primary target for adult basic education programmes. See Box C, page 22.

These countries face a two-fold challenge. Not only must they increase school enrolments, but they must also improve the "efficiency" of schooling by reducing dropout and repetition rates among pupils in the education system. Actually, a significant proportion of pupils do not complete the primary cycle or even reach Grade 4, which is considered the threshold of sustainable

Box C

SCHOOLING, THE LEAKY FAUCET

If all children attended school long enough to become sustainably literate – that is, beyond the risk of relapsing into illiteracy – adult illiteracy would vanish from the earth in one generation. Unfortunately, this is still a distant prospect. Today, millions of school-age children never enter a school, and millions of those who do enter school drop out before completing even the four years of schooling that are assumed to be necessary to develop sustainable literacy skills. Later, these children will join the ranks of the millions of adults who cannot read or write. Like a leaky faucet, the school is not yet able to stop the flow of young people into the vast pool of illiterate adults.

The graph in this box illustrates how the coverage and efficiency of primary schooling can affect the number of adults (aged 15 or more) defined as the "target population" for adult literacy programmes. Using data from eight populous countries with large numbers of illiterates, a simulation exercise generated the average number of illiterate adults that each country would have to target for literacy efforts each year during the 1990s in order to attain 100 per cent adult literacy by 2000. The simulation assumed that past trends in school enrolment and drop-out would continue through the decade.

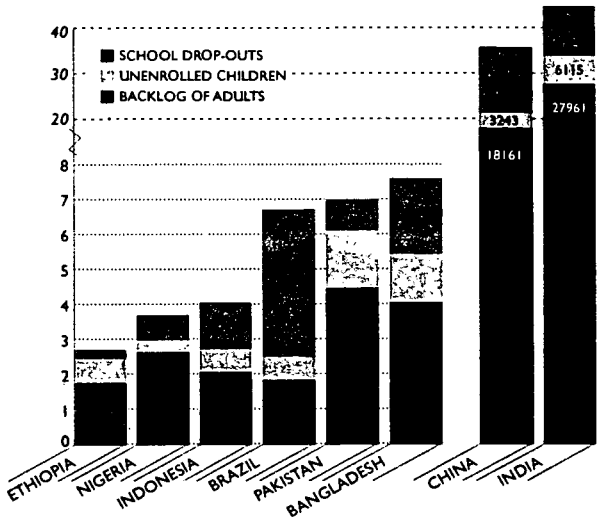
The average yearly literacy target population for each country has three components: (1) the backlog of adults who were illiterate at the beginning of the decade, plus (2) those children unenrolled in school and who reach age 15 during the 1990s, plus (3) those pupils who leave school before completing four years of study and who reach age 15 during the 1990s, since they are assumed not to have sustainable literacy skills.

The graph shows, for example, that China would need to target each year not only some 18 million of the backlog of illiterate adults, but also an additional 3.2 million young adults (reaching age 15) who did not attend school, plus 14.5 million young adults who dropped out of school before completing Grade 4.

For six of the eight countries, the pool of illiterate adults is replenished more by pupils dropping out of school before completing Grade 4 than by children who were never enrolled at all. Ethiopia and Pakistan are the two exceptions, where the number and proportion of unschooled children entering the pool of illiterates is much greater than those of school drop-outs entering the pool. One can see also that in all countries except Brazil, half or more of the adults in the average annual target population are part of the backlog of adult illiterates carried over from prior decades. In Nigeria, the proportion is around 70 per cent.

In all of these countries, the target population of illiterate adults could be significantly reduced by tightening the leaky faucet through universalizing access and retention of all children in primary school for at least four full years to acquire sustainable literacy skills. For a country the size of India, this would effectively reduce the average annual target population from 45 million to 28 million. However, in all countries, the remaining backlog of illiterate adults can be reduced only through programmes specially designed for adults and carried out on a large scale.

ESTIMATED AVERAGE ANNUAL TARGET ILLITERATE POPULATIONS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1990-2000 (ADULTS 15 YEARS AND OLDER, IN MILLIONS)

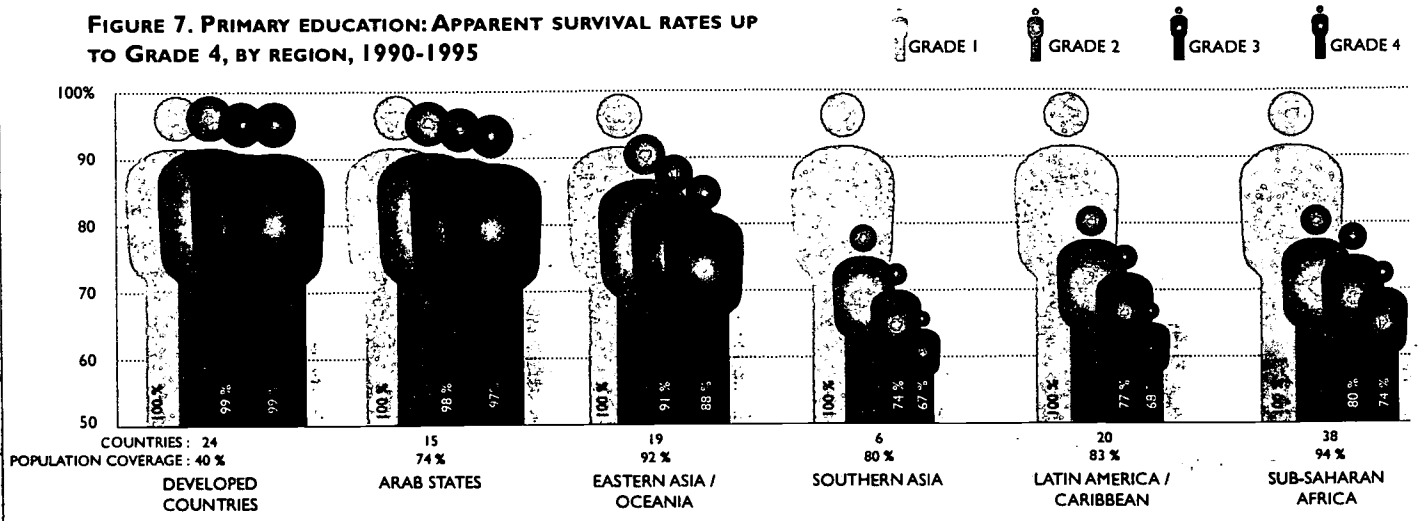


literacy (see Figure 7). These pupils are likely to join the masses of illiterate or semi-literate adults.

Schooling no longer constitutes the only organized, educational experience for most people, as the need for and supply of lifelong learning opportunities grow. The world is changing so fast that even if everyone completed compulsory schooling, people would still need more education. However, a period of initial schooling that equips all children with the basic knowledge, skills, values and attitudes they need to function in their communities and to continue learning throughout life will continue to be necessary, though not sufficient by itself.

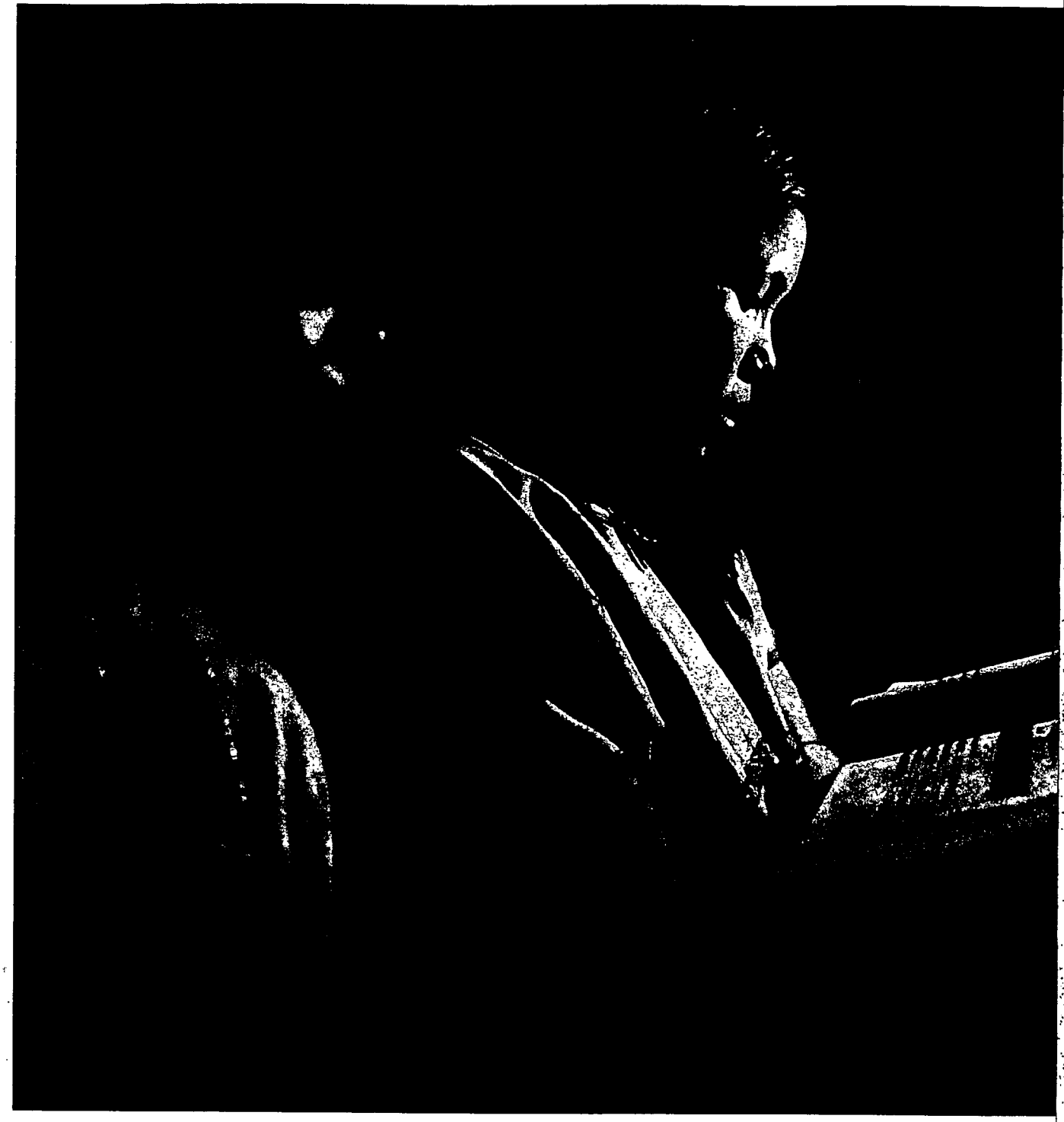
A sound strategy to provide basic education for all requires a combined effort to improve and expand basic learning opportunities — in school and out-of-school — for children, youth and adults. Any strategy that relies on the primary school alone, in the absence of complementary measures, will fail to meet many basic learning needs and is likely to be inefficient. Furthermore, a sound strategy must take into account that the effectiveness of basic education is strongly affected by forces beyond the control of schools. For example, the use

FIGURE 7. PRIMARY EDUCATION: APPARENT SURVIVAL RATES UP TO GRADE 4, BY REGION, 1990-1995



of a widely shared common language, access to newspapers and books, and good levels of nutrition and health tend to support basic learning.

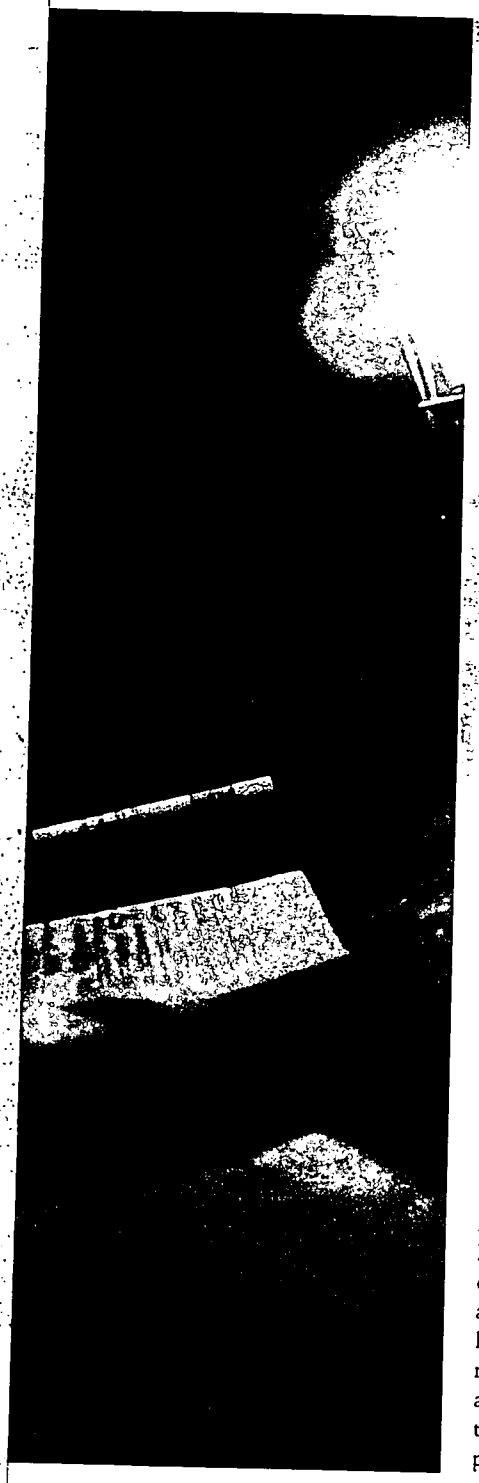
Educational activities organized outside the school, usually referred to as "nonformal education", have a major role to play, particularly in providing learning opportunities for adults. In the words of the Amman report: "Nonformal or out-of-school education, once seen as a marginal and second-class alternative to formal schooling, is increasingly seen as a necessary and complementary component of a comprehensive strategy to provide Education for All". The Forum recommended that "nonformal education should be recognized as an integral part of an education system, rather than a parallel but separate alternative". ■



Evening literacy classes, Thailand (Photo: UNESCO/Vidal)

Adult Basic in the World

Part III



Adult basic education encompasses a wide variety of activities, some well-established, while others are struggling to survive.

Adult education is a long-standing tradition in the Nordic countries, especially in Sweden, where large numbers of adults have participated in "study circles" since the 1970's. Debate is now underway about the equity of such programmes, with critics arguing that the courses intended for under-educated Swedes tend to be of short duration and do little to address fundamental educational disparities.

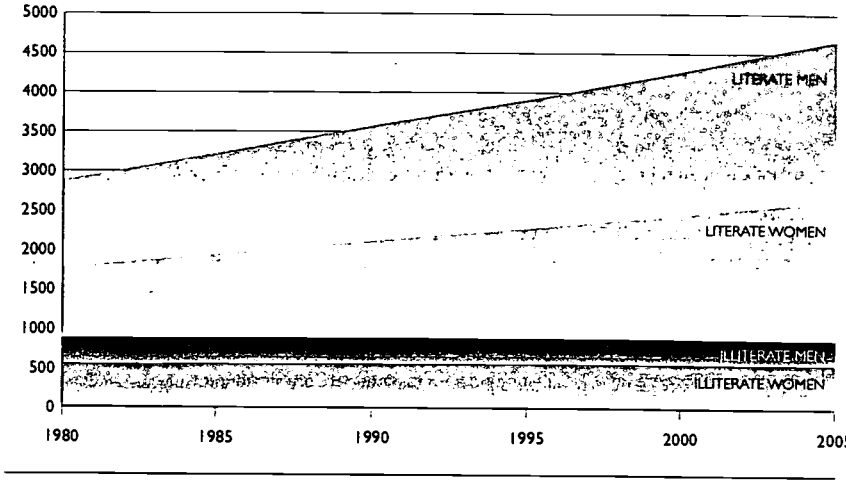
The best-known adult education movement in the developing world is the "conscientization" approach inspired by the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire. Through his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and other writings, Freire argued that if adults are given a chance to engage in active learning, they will become aware of the nature and causes of social oppression and gain the tools to participate in actions toward social change. This concept of popular education expanded throughout Latin America during the late 1960s and remains a potent force. The projects it generated are small and localized, however, so its overall quantitative impact is said to be rather limited.

There have been several examples of successful, national mass literacy campaigns over the years. In some countries, such as Cuba, Nicaragua, Viet Nam and Somalia, their "one-off" campaigns were undertaken soon after revolutionary movements acceded to power and enjoyed widespread popular support. In Ecuador, however, the government showed that it was possible to mobilize young people to teach literacy on a volunteer basis in a nonrevolutionary setting. See Box A, page 18.

Other adult education programmes are as different as the settings where they are carried out, and many combine literacy instruction with other social objectives. For example, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Salvador uses its radio station to provide basic education to children, youth and adults, while China has organized 200,000 "parent schools" attached to formal schools to educate citizens about health, nutrition, child development and other matters. Indonesia has a large-scale programme to educate mothers on the care of children between birth and age three, while Nepal operates a programme that uses textbooks in the form of comics to approximate the first three years of formal primary school for adults who have little or no schooling. The principal organizers of many such programmes in developing countries are non-governmental organizations (NGOs), most of which operate on a small scale.

Education Today

FIGURE 8. WORLD ADULT LITERATE AND ILLITERATE POPULATION BY GENDER, 1980-2005 (MILLIONS)



Adult Literacy and Illiteracy

Statistics show that the ranks of the literate adult population in the world are growing, though the patterns in the industrialized and the developing countries are sharply different.

As can be seen in Figure 8, the number of literate men and women in the world is increasing, and this growth is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. At the same time, the number of illiterate adults has remained at about 885 million since 1980 and, if present trends continue, will remain largely unchanged through 2010. This constant core group of illiterates, almost two-thirds of them women, persists over time despite efforts that are increasing both the number and proportion of the literate population in the world.

The distribution of illiterate adults, as shown in Figure 9, remains quite uneven: virtually all live in developing countries, with more than half in India and China combined, and nearly a

FIGURE 9. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ADULT ILLITERATES, 1995

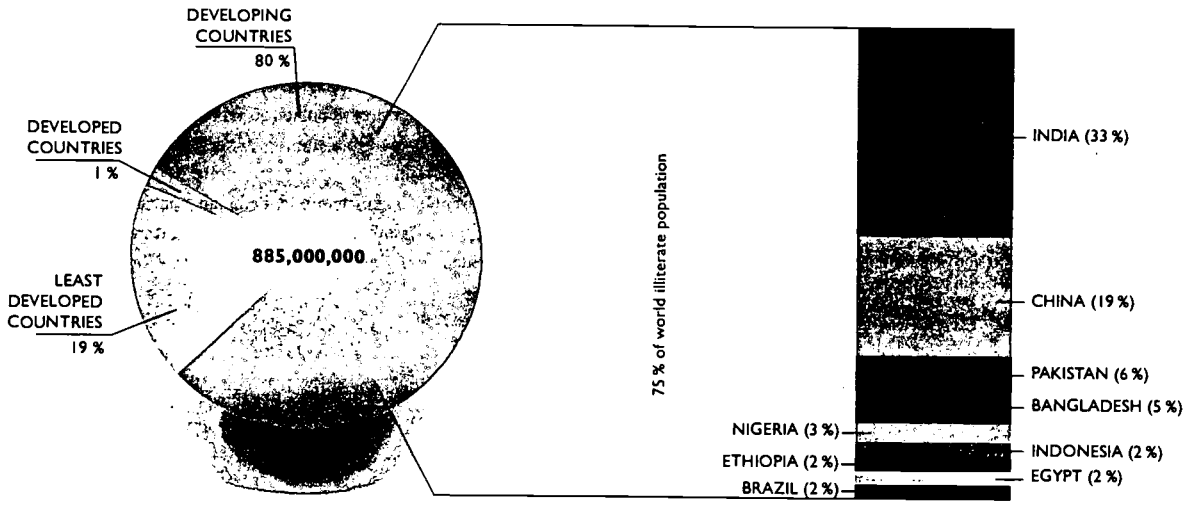


FIGURE 10. ESTIMATED ADULT LITERACY RATES BY REGION, 1980 TO 2010

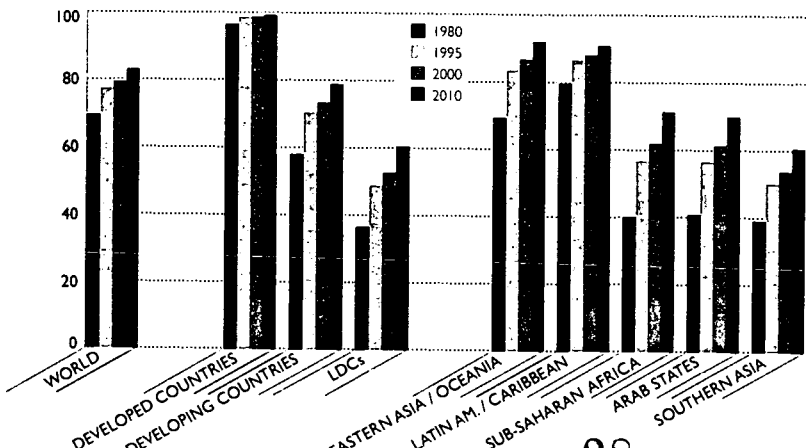
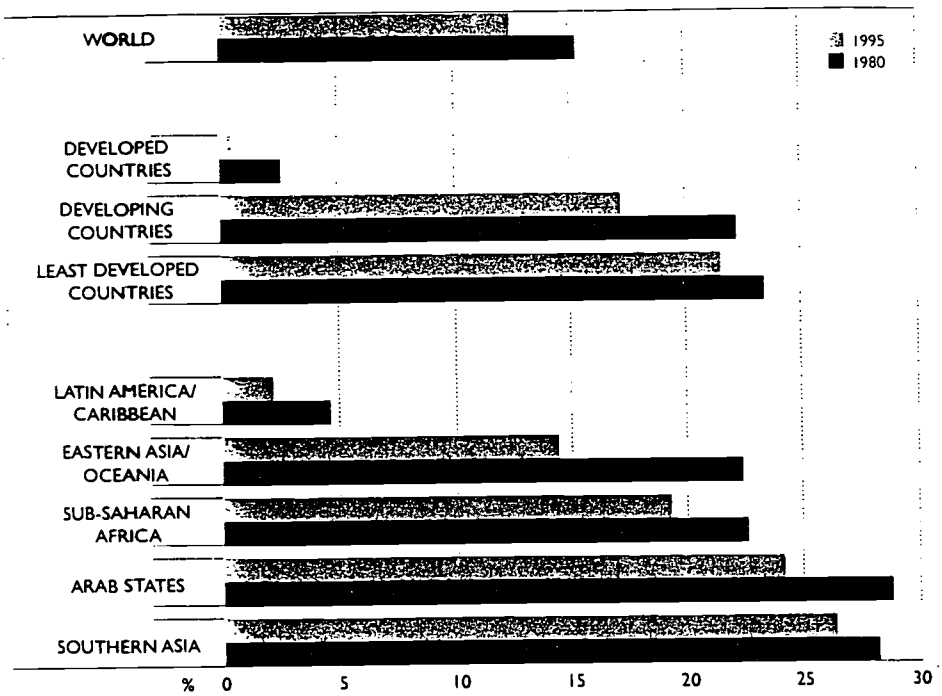


FIGURE 11. GENDER GAP IN ADULT LITERACY RATES BY REGION, 1980 AND 1995



quarter more in seven other nations. Figure 10 shows that while literacy rates are improving in all regions of the world, there are major disparities among them.

As shown in Figure 11, all regions have made progress in narrowing the gender gap in adult literacy rates, but significant regional disparities remain. Figure 12 shows that improvements in literacy rates have been more pronounced among younger age-groups.

Data on the distribution of the adult population by level of educational attainment also show substantial regional disparities. As seen in Figure 13, page 28, the countries in some regions, notably sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, have large proportions of adults who either have no formal schooling or have an incomplete primary education. These adults constitute the primary target group for adult basic education.

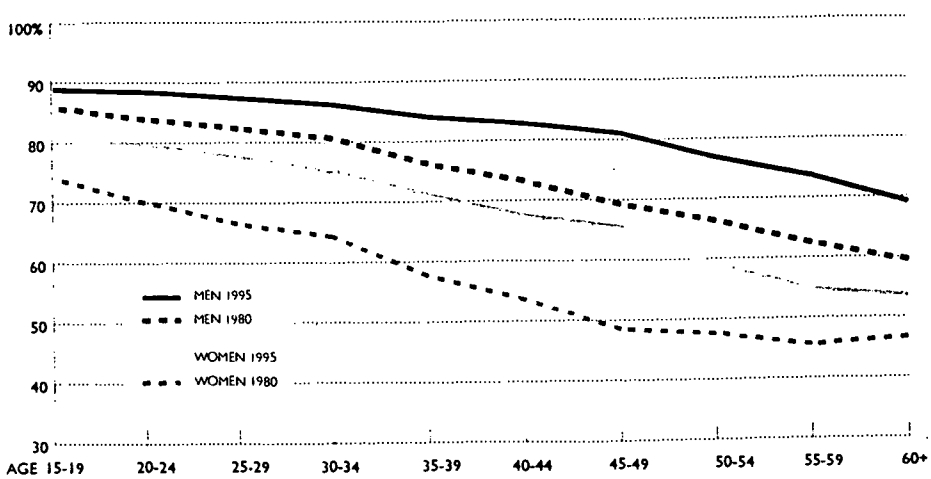
There is a strong possibility that these statistics understate the extent of adult illiteracy because many countries use years of schooling as a proxy indicator for literacy. This does not take into account that adults with poor literacy skills that are seldom used often relapse into illiteracy. Yet, on the eve of the 21st century, most children in most countries have at least a few years of schooling, so the number of "true" illiterates who have had no instruction is probably declining. On the other hand, the number of individuals with poor literacy skills is probably growing, and as the requirements of the workplace increase, these people will find themselves increasingly marginalized.

Progress During the 1990s

Participants in the mid-decade meeting of the EFA Forum in Amman, Jordan, in June 1996, examined the question of whether the world was moving closer to the goal of universal basic education agreed at the Jomtien Conference in 1990. "In the six years since the adoption of the World Declaration on Education for All," they wrote in the final communiqué, "there has been significant progress in basic education, not in all countries nor as much as had been hoped, but progress that is nonetheless real."

The major gains came in expanded primary schooling. The communiqué states: "Primary school enrolment has increased, an estimated 50 million more children were enrolled in 1995 than in 1990. The number of out-of-school children, which had grown inexorably for decades, is also beginning to decline." It went on to say that attendance gains

FIGURE 12. WORLD LITERACY RATES BY AGE-GROUP AND GENDER, 1980 AND 1995



were accompanied by "a growing emphasis on the quality of education".

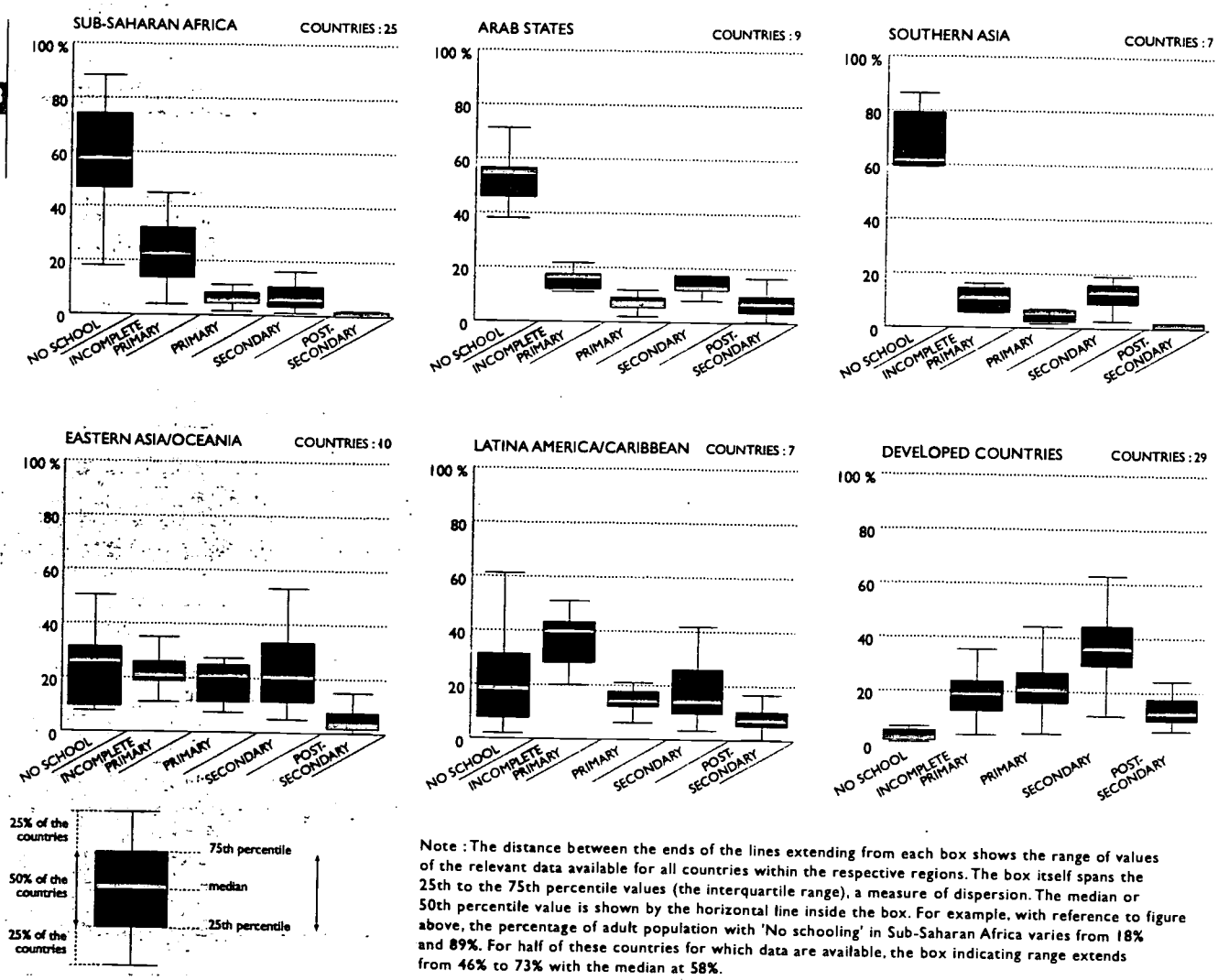
While celebrating such gains, the Forum warned against oversimplifying the problem and focusing only on primary school enrolment. "The expanded vision of basic education espoused in Jomtien has often been reduced to a simple emphasis upon putting more children into school: an essential step, but only one of many measures needed to achieve EFA," says the Amman Affirmation. Participants were concerned that there was little information available on adult basic education, with the exception of reports from a few countries such as India, Namibia and South Africa, that have launched major adult literacy programmes in recent years.

The final report of the Amman meeting noted, "Many participants felt that the strong emphasis given so far to expanding schooling has obscured other dimensions of EFA and particularly its agenda for meeting basic learning needs of people of all ages — needs that evolve over time and tend to become more sophisticated." The report noted also that representatives of some developing countries who had spoken of achieving education for all within a few years were "apparently confusing EFA with UPE, i.e. universal primary education," thus illustrating a political choice that has been supported by many external funding agencies.

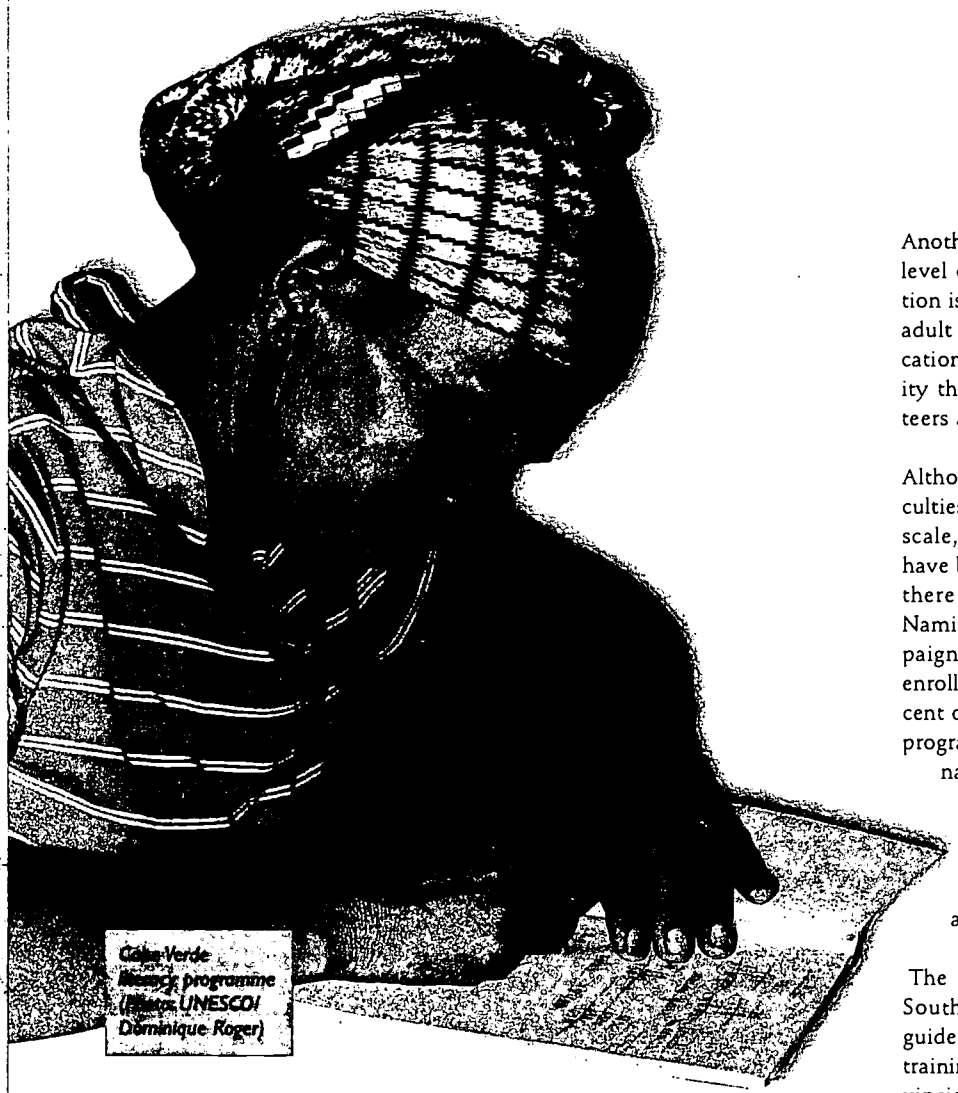
Current Investments in Adult Basic Education

Despite the commitments made at the Jomtien Conference, the funding of adult basic education is precarious in nearly all countries.

FIGURE 13. LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF THE ADULT POPULATION (24+ YEARS) BY REGION, 1995



Note : The distance between the ends of the lines extending from each box shows the range of values of the relevant data available for all countries within the respective regions. The box itself spans the 25th to the 75th percentile values (the interquartile range), a measure of dispersion. The median or 50th percentile value is shown by the horizontal line inside the box. For example, with reference to figure above, the percentage of adult population with 'No schooling' in Sub-Saharan Africa varies from 18% and 89%. For half of these countries for which data are available, the box indicating range extends from 46% to 73% with the median at 58%.



Column 5 in the data tables shows the low level of current public spending on primary and adult education as a proportion of total educational expenditures. However, these figures need to be interpreted with caution. In developing countries, public funding for adult basic education can be found also in the budgets of the ministries of health, agriculture, community development, etc. Also, it should be recognized that *public* spending on adult education is only part of the picture. Much adult education is privately financed, and participants generally bear some of the direct costs and substantial indirect costs. In industrialized countries, adult education typically includes more than instruction in literacy, numeracy and other basic skills, so public spending on adult *basic* education is not easily identifiable.

In developing countries

There is no doubt that the Jomtien Conference and the International Literacy Year, 1990, raised global consciousness about the value of adult basic education and gave impetus to several literacy initiatives, such as those profiled in these pages. Nevertheless, the available statistical and anecdotal data suggest that few governments have given any real funding priority to adult literacy.

One reason is that financial crises and structural adjustment programmes have led many governments to reduce their education budget. The result has been that adult education, which lacks an organized constituency, has often suffered deep budget cuts. According to one estimate, allocations for adult education represent less than two per cent of the gradually decreasing education budgets in Latin America. The cuts in education budgets are paralleled by reductions in other social sectors, such as health and agricultural extension programmes, suggesting to one observer that "the State has practically abandoned the peasants" [10].

Another possible reason for the low level of public funding for adult education is the view of some politicians that adult education is not so much an educational enterprise as a charitable activity that can be carried out with volunteers and minimal resources.

Although widespread economic difficulties have meant that very few large-scale, national literacy programmes have been undertaken during the 1990s, there have been some exceptions. Namibia launched a well-designed campaign in September 1992 that has enrolled 35,000 learners a year, 80 per cent of them women. The target of the programme is to achieve an 80 per cent national literacy rate by 2000, and preparations are underway for additional adult basic education programmes that will extend beyond basic literacy. See **Box D**, page 30.

The government of newly democratic South Africa has adopted national guidelines for adult basic education and training, but left implementation to provincial governments working with NGOs, universities and the business sector. This approach is seen as most beneficial to black workers who previously faced discrimination on the job, but it is less beneficial to the poorest segments of the population, especially women in rural areas.

Still another exception can be found in Ghana, where the World Bank agreed to fund a large national functional literacy programme. Since its inception in January 1992, about 200,000 learners a year, 60 per cent of them women, have been enrolled annually. The programme makes use of literacy "facilitators" who, along with their supervisors, work on a volunteer basis. Evaluations have shown that about 50 per cent of the learners reached the point where they could read simple passages correctly. Positive side effects included increased awareness of the value of tree planting, vaccinations and cleanliness, as well as the benefits of boiling water before drinking.

Box D

NAMIBIA: LITERACY FOR CITIZENSHIP

"I am not blind anymore."
"My eyes are open."
"Being literate has taken me away from the darkness into the light."

Such were the testimonials of participants in the National Literacy Programme (NLPN) carried out in Namibia during the early 1990s. Now able to read letters from distant family members, to help their children with homework, to fill out forms and control their finances, these newly literate Namibians see a whole new world before them.

After becoming independent from South Africa in 1990, the leaders of Namibia took aim at the country's 35 per cent adult illiteracy rate and decided to make education a top national priority.

An article establishing the right to education was written into the country's constitution, and the new government set aside one-quarter of the national budget for education. Three per cent of the education budget was earmarked for adult education, and the Ministry of Education and Culture used these funds to set up the NLPN. It was backed up by structures in seven regions, 94 districts and 2,162 localities, which aided in recruiting participants and supporting the programme in communities throughout the country.

The curriculum focused on three progressive stages of learning, with primers in ten of the local languages for the most basic stage, readers in nine languages for the second stage, and readers in basic English for the final stage.

Topics for the readers ranged from health and home management to government. Math textbooks were also published for each stage. By early 1995, some 37,000 learners were enrolled in all stages of the programme.

The NLPN received strong public support from President Sam Nujoma and members of the Parliament, who envisioned it as a vehicle for enabling people to better exercise their rights and responsibilities as Namibian citizens. As the Hon. Dr Mosé P. Tjitendero, speaker of the National Assembly, explained at the opening of a national seminar on literacy, "Through the acquisition of literacy, we want our people [...] to be self-confident, well informed, and, if necessary, critical. We want our citizens to boldly exercise the rights and responsibilities which are theirs as human beings."

The speaker also spoke of the positive benefits associated with the literacy of women, a powerful issue in a country where 39 per cent of women are the single heads of household, each with an average of 5.2 persons. He noted that literate women have more healthy families, pass on their knowledge to their family members, and convey to them a sense of the value of education.

Eighty per cent of the adults enrolled in the NLPN courses were women, and their success rates were considerably better than those of men. At Stage one, 68 per cent of women completed the course versus only 31 per cent of men. At Stage two, the success rate was 82 per cent for women and 18 per cent for men.

Participants spoke of gaining not only new skills, but enhanced self-confidence. Angelika Taatago Lukas, who is 47, reported, "Family members are happy with me, and they also show respect. When I return from classes they want to know what I have been taught." Another women recounted, "Before, I talked with my hands in front of my mouth without looking up. But now I feel strong and free to speak up."

Women also play a key role in running the programme. Seventy percent of the literacy "promoters" were young women without any other income, supporting nine family members on average. Almost all the promoters felt their experience had been positive, citing gains in their ability to communicate and work with people. Many promoters will certainly develop into community leaders or professional and adult educators now that they have been given a chance.

In industrialized countries

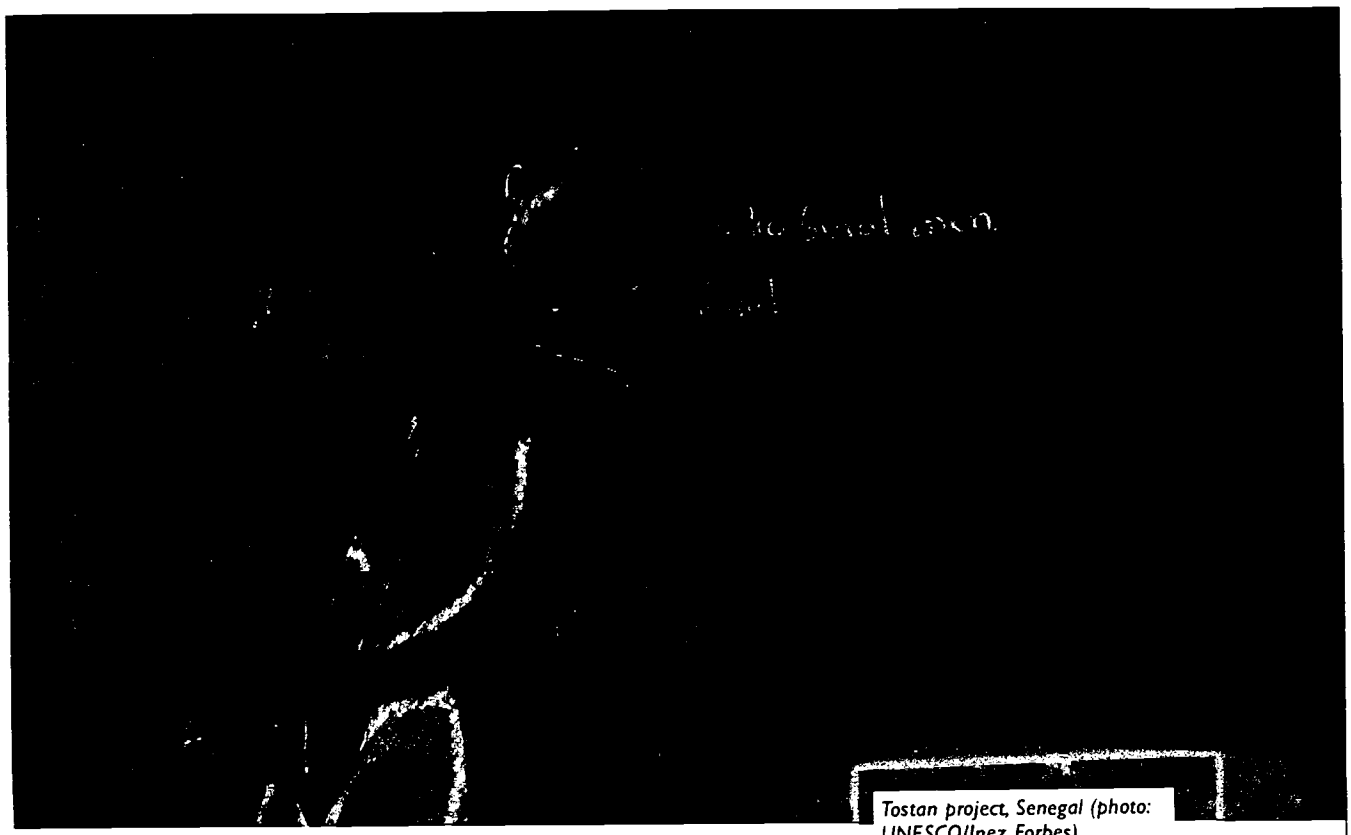
Economic recession and stagnation have taken their toll on education budgets also in the industrialized countries. Yet, as a group, they have more varied sources of funding to draw on. Private enterprise underwrites and often organizes many adult education activities, particularly those that enhance knowledge and skills useful in the workplace. Various tax incentives are offered by some governments to encourage such training and retraining of the workforce.

A recent report, *Adult Education Participation in Industrialized Countries*, which examined data from Canada, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States, spoke of an "explosion" of demand for adult and continuing education. It found that almost 75 million of the 200 million adults living in these six countries "participated in organized learning activities during the year of the survey" [11].

However, the provision of basic education for adults in the industrialized countries is not so evident.

The available data must be considered with caution. For one thing, the study cited above defined adult education in a broad sense that included on-the-job skill training and other continuing education programmes that would not normally be considered "basic" education. Moreover, distribution of these educational services is highly concentrated among certain segments of the population.

The OECD report *Lifelong Learning for All* documented what it termed a "large and unmet demand" for adult and continuing vocational training. Its data indicate that while one-third of the labour force in some countries participates in job-related education or training in any given year, this figure implies that two-thirds of the labor force do *not* participate in such activities. Moreover, it said, "The data further suggest that many of the least-qualified receive training lasting only



Tostan project, Senegal (photo: UNESCO/Inez Forbes)

one or two days — an amount that is unlikely to count much towards the goal of acquiring new skills and qualifications" [12].

Priorities of donors

Another factor in the equivocal state of adult basic education has been the declining support it has received from donors since the economic troubles of the 1980s. Despite rhetoric to the contrary, many donors have been led to concentrate their financial and programme resources on formal primary schooling for children.

It is frequently asserted that adult literacy programmes are inefficient and costly, and such accusations have some merit. Persons seeking basic education as adults may approach the learning process with memories of failure and frustration from their childhood experience at school, as well as other psychological baggage that children do not possess. Unlike children, adults choose to learn but also may choose to drop out whenever they wish. And many do. It can also be argued, however, that adult learners, who sacrifice their free time, often at the end of a hard day, and who really feel the need to acquire new knowledge, are probably more motivated to learn than many are children.

Thus the supposed inefficiency of adult education programmes is often used to justify an alternative investment in formal schooling for children. Such reasoning, however, ignores the fact that vast amounts of resources are also spent on children who fail to complete primary school and on those who "survive" to the end but learn little of any use to their lives.

The costs of effective literacy and basic education programmes for adults and young people compare favourably with the costs of primary education

One observer concluded that "The costs of effective literacy and basic education programmes for adults and young people compare favourably with the costs of primary education." Moreover, he continued, "Our knowledge of what commonly causes inefficiencies and wastage in adult and young people's programming is now sufficiently advanced to prevent them" [13]. There is also evidence that the failure to reduce the absolute number of illiterate adults in the world is the result not of inefficient adult education programmes, but of the fact that the pool of illiterates is constantly being replenished by new arrivals, many of whom spent at least some time in primary school.

Donors also express reluctance to fund adult literacy programmes for reasons of scale and accountability, as well as doubts about their quality. Many of these programmes are small, and the non-governmental organizations that run many of them often lack expertise in standard accounting procedures and the credibility of public administrations. The quality of programmes also varies considerably, from those that produce little learning to those that develop basic literacy skills much faster than schools do. ■

...ram Women's Movement, Bangladesh (Photo: UNESCO/Vidal)

Part IV

Why Invest in Adult Basic Education?

Widespread basic education is a prerequisite for economic growth. This was true in the past for developed countries such as Germany, France and the United Kingdom. The United States, for example, had achieved an 80 per cent literacy rate by the mid-19th century. The importance of education for economic growth has been demonstrated more recently by the newly industrialized countries, such as the Republic of Korea and Singapore, which achieved near-universal primary school enrolment by the mid-1960s.

The Economic Rationale

Researchers have documented the correlation between investment in basic education and economic productivity in developing countries. Studies have estimated that one-quarter to one-half of the agricultural labour productivity differences between countries can be explained by differences in education levels. Figure 14 shows how adult literacy rates correlate positively with gross national product (GNP) per capita in developing countries. The research shows that, as a rule, the economic payoffs of investment in basic education are highest in low-income agricultural economies and those still in the early stages of industrial development. The return on investment is largest at the primary level of schooling, but still significant at the secondary level. The economic returns apply equally to the education of girls and boys.

In the emerging "learning economies" of industrialized countries, investment in basic education is recognized as a prerequisite for economic growth. Studies by OECD and others have estimated that the

education level of the workforce accounts for up to a quarter of economic growth [14]. There is also evidence of the private returns to individuals on their investment in education beyond primary schooling. Research in the United States has found that a worker with a college degree can expect to earn half again as much as someone with only a secondary school diploma. Such gains, of course, vary widely by occupation and are typically greater for men than for women, perhaps because women are more likely to drop out of the workforce for periods of time.

The case for investment in primary schooling for children is compelling, but there is surprisingly little information on the economic payoffs of investment in adult basic education. Most of the relevant research in industrialized countries has focused on vocational training for workers already employed. Daniel A. Wagner, director of the International Literacy Institute, observed that "there is little empirical research as yet to suggest that adult literacy programmes are enabling the unemployed to obtain new jobs or to make major career changes, even though anecdotal claims abound. Furthermore, there is virtually no evidence from developing countries that adult literacy programmes lead to actual economic improvements in the lives of programme participants" [15].

Box E

BRAZILIAN WORKERS LEARN TO BE HEARD

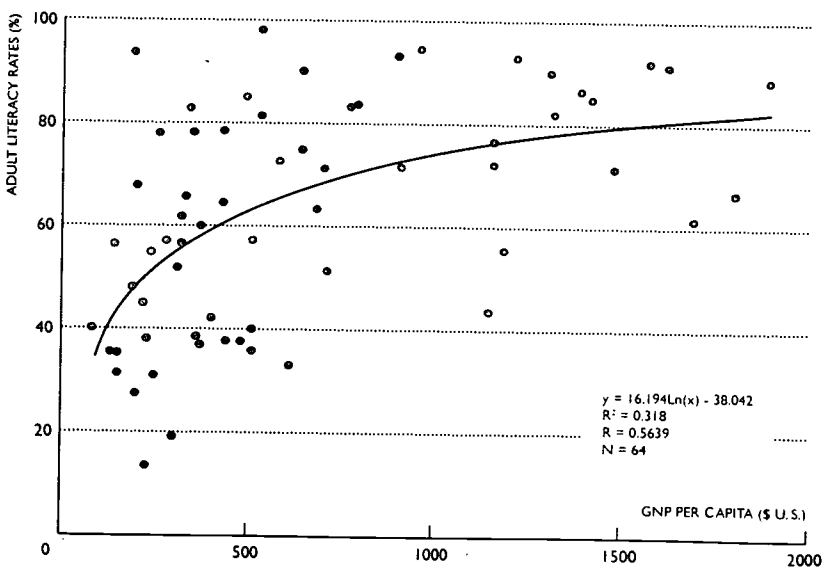
Over half the population of the State of Paraiba in Northeast Brazil is illiterate, and the rate is even higher in its rural areas, which supply many of Brazil's construction workers. These workers drift into cities where they work long, exhausting hours, and their employers often show little concern for the workers' personal well being.

Recognizing that literate workers are in a better position to articulate their needs and rights, the construction workers' union in the city of Joao Pessoa undertook to promote literacy among its members and other workers whom it hoped to organize. In 1991, the union joined with the nearby Federal University of Paraiba to establish "schools" at construction sites throughout the city. Using university lecturers and students as teachers, these workers' schools offered classes ranging from basic literacy to science subjects. When using classrooms was not feasible, workers watched videos on various topics or traveled with teachers to local cultural sites.

Despite physical fatigue and the overtime work necessitated by low wages, workers showed up Monday through Thursday evenings after work. Since worker turnover was high, the makeup of the classes was constantly changing. Nevertheless, the results were palpable, including regular attendance by worker-students at union meetings and a willingness by workers to stand up for their rights in the workplace.

Unlike many literacy campaigns, the programme in Joao Pessoa was an urban and local effort. The workers' schools succeeded with minimal state funding, but without support from the central government nor nationwide voluntary mobilization. The success of the union and the university team in mobilizing the frequently neglected population of manual labourers shows that determination is a crucial factor in the success of adult literacy efforts.

FIGURE 14. ADULT LITERACY RATES (AGE 15+) AND GNP PER CAPITA IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH GNP UNDER US$2000, 1995. (EACH DOT REPRESENTS ONE COUNTRY)



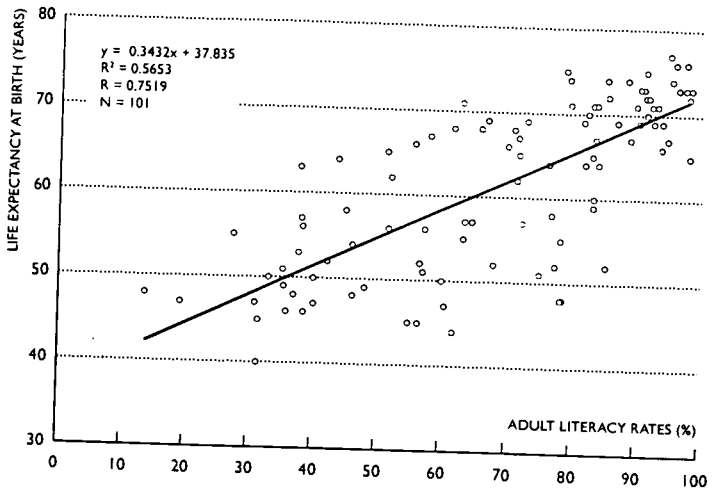
The Social Rationale

Man does not live by bread alone. The purpose of basic education is not only to turn people into producers and consumers, but to help them to adapt to and shape the conditions in which they find themselves and to become fulfilled individuals, parents and members of the community. Societies as a whole benefit from having a substantial mass of educated adults who share a com-

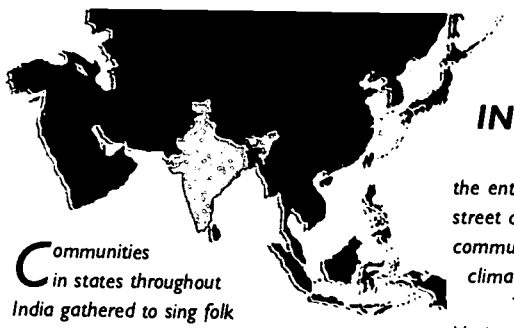
mon cultural heritage and have access to other cultures and to universal cultural values. "Even if literacy has only limited direct economic consequences", said Wagner, "it may have secondary social consequences which become important objectives for development planners" [16].

Some of these social consequences are immediately evident. In an evaluation of a literacy programme in 1989 in Ernakulam, a district in the Indian state of Kerala, P. J. Joseph reported that, in addition to achieving 100 per cent adult literacy, the programme produced significant side effects afterwards, including a considerable reduction in the incidence of petty crimes, a reduction in the number of invalid votes during the next general election, and a decline in the number of dropouts from schools. "When learners began to enjoy the fruits of literacy," he wrote, "they became responsible citizens, and they took care to give their children all the facilities of education of which they had been deprived" [17]. (See Box F)

FIGURE 15. ADULT LITERACY RATES (AGE 15+) AND LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, 1995



Literacy can also lead to social action. In the Nellore district of Andra Pradesh, another Indian state, the literacy campaign used a text that included a story



Box F

INDIA'S TOTAL APPROACH TO LITERACY ACTION

Communities in states throughout India gathered to sing folk songs and watch plays. Students, teachers and community leaders rallied at mass meetings to focus public attention on literacy. In the 18 development blocks and 12 towns of West Bengal's Hooghly District, teachers mounted door-to-door canvasses to convince parents to send their non-enrolled children to school.

These diverse actions were part of India's nationwide, Total Literacy Campaigns, which use a holisitic approach. Adult literacy programmes generally offer instruction in basic reading and writing for adult learners. However, India's Total Literacy Campaigns recognized the need to mobilize all members of a community. Each district-led campaign involves pre-school and school-age children, as well as adult learners, and it mobilizes the entire community — including artists, street dramatists, folk dancers and community committees — to create a climate hospitable to literacy.

This approach was adopted by the National Literacy Mission, one of several missions established by the Indian Government following the launch of the National Policy on Education in 1986. The Mission modeled the approach on a previous effort, PROPEL, which had promoted community ownership of education. Under the PROPEL programme, 137 villages established Village Education Committees (VECs), which evaluated the needs of each village, conducted training sessions for teachers, provided space for non-formal education centres and mobilized the parents of children not enrolled in schools. The VECs also set up various support programmes, including child recreation centres for 3- to 6-year olds and Women's Development Groups.

The Total Literacy Campaigns reach out to all age groups. By June 1996, the campaigns had taken root in 401 districts throughout India, over 73 million learners had been enrolled, and 56 million of them had become literate. Kerala became the first Indian state to achieve 100 per cent adult literacy. In Kerala's Ernakulam District, for example, over 185,000 persons aged six to sixty had learned to read thanks to the commitment of 20,000 literacy volunteers.

The literacy campaigns did more than enrol children in school and teach adults basic literacy skills. They also raised awareness about issues covered in the materials and infused teachers and learners with a long-term interest in literacy. Once people feel that they have a stake in the process and know how to organize a campaign, efforts to promote and sustain literacy can continue even without government sponsorship.

Box G

THE PRIORITY OF WOMEN'S LITERACY

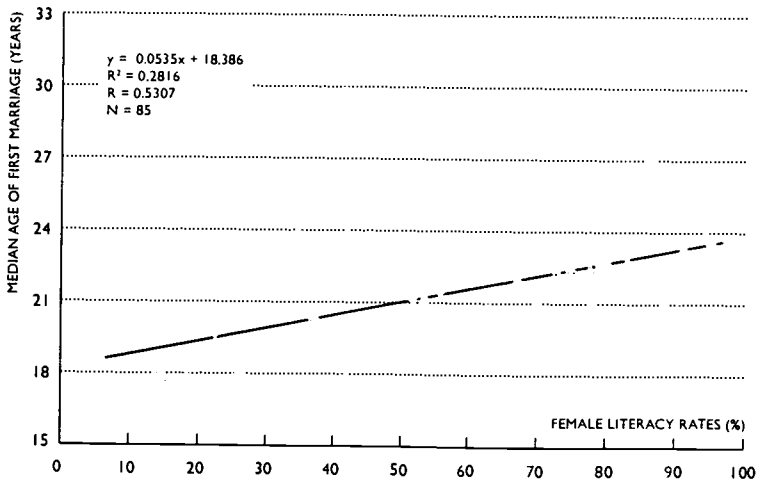
The gender dimension of illiteracy is rarely raised in industrialized countries, where the majority of illiterate adults and those with poor literacy skills tend to be men. In developing countries, however, the majority of illiterate adults are women, and the gender gap in illiteracy persists.

The Amman Affirmation cited the education of women as an issue deserving priority attention. Referring back to the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, it recalled that "No point was more stressed in Jomtien than the urgent need to close the gender gap in education, both as a matter of simple equity and as the most effective means for responding to demographic pressures and promoting development. Yet, progress towards this goal has been excruciatingly slow; much more must be done."

The final report of the Amman meeting went on to point out that "since Jomtien, there is a much better understanding of the positive links between educating girls and women, on one hand, and family income, health, fertility, child survival, and agricultural productivity on the other." Numerous studies and statistical correlations show strong links between the education of women and such measures of well-being, and it is now widely recognized that the benefits of investing in the education of girls and women extend to members of both sexes, both children and adults.

The Amman report states that "Participants talked about a 'new political will' to close the gender gap and urged that instead of looking only at constraints to educating girls, one should identify pragmatic local solutions that accelerate the enrolment of girls in school." It then cited a few specific examples of progress, such as the programme in Guinea where the government has formed a partnership with local organizations and external donors to boost girls' enrolment. Unfortunately, such programmes appear still to be the exception rather than the rule.

FIGURE 16. FEMALE LITERACY RATES (AGE 15+) AND MEDIAN AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, 1995



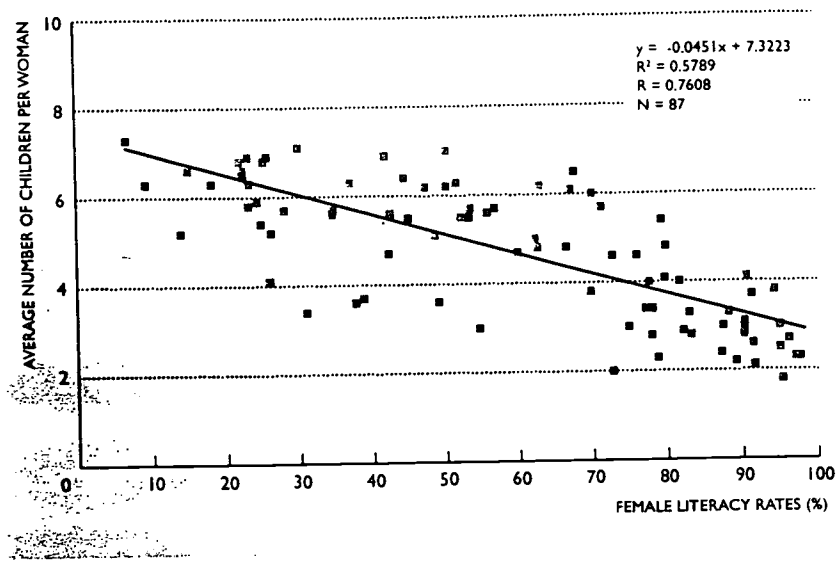
based on the experiences of women harassed by drunken husbands. This lesson inspired newly literate women to organize committees to protest against the sale of alcohol, which led to the closing down of the liquor shop in their village and the spread of their movement into neighbouring districts.

A large body of research has established a strong correlation between literacy and social development indicators, such as health and nutrition, life expectancy and fertility in developing countries. As can be seen from Figure 15, life expectancy at birth rises as adult literacy rates increase. Studies have shown that the greatest social benefits accrue from the extension of basic education to girls and women. As they become more literate, women tend to marry later (Figure 16), bear fewer children (Figure 17), and the mortality rate of young children declines (Figure 18). Other studies have shown that women with even a few years of schooling are better agricultural workers, generate more income, and take better care of their families. Educated women are more likely to serve nutritious meals and seek medical care; consequently, their children are more likely to avoid illness and do well in school. (See Box G).

Such data make intuitive sense. Women, after all, tend to run households, and they influence their daughters, who have households and families of their own later on.

Although research has shown compelling correlations between basic education and various measures of social well-being, the issue of causality remains unclear. One observer has suggested that "literacy and basic education are perhaps better seen as *enabling* factors in the complex matter of development rather than as strictly causal factors" [18]. Nevertheless, the correlations are strong, and the non-economic arguments for investment in basic education are likely to become more important in the future, when meaning in life will probably depend less on structured employment.

FIGURE 17. TOTAL FERTILITY RATES AND FEMALE LITERACY RATES (AGE 15+) IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, 1995



As with the economic returns on investment in basic education, studies of the social impact of basic education have relied primarily on data relating to years of schooling rather than on analysis of the outcomes of adult education programmes for youth and adults. One reason for this is that adult learning beyond basic literacy has for the most part been a privilege reserved for a fortunate few.

All countries on the development spectrum need "social capital" as well as human capital. Citizens need to trust each other and be able to work together. Social capital is eroding in many countries, due to many factors, including ethnic conflicts, and those countries cannot wait until their children are properly educated and grow up to re-establish social solidarity. Reversing social marginalization — and polarization — requires efforts on many fronts, including the provision of opportunities for adults to acquire at least a basic education.

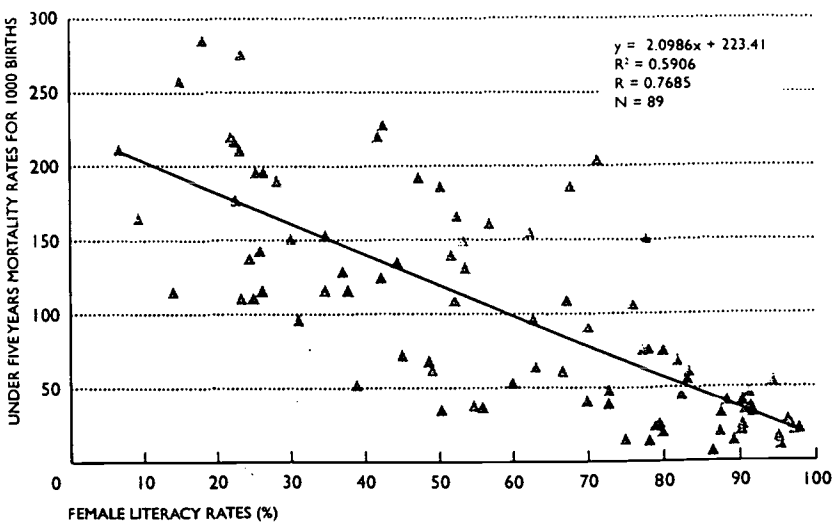
The Political Rationale

History offers many examples of countries that have embarked on literacy programmes to achieve political objectives, such as establishing religious authority in Protestant countries in the 16th century or promoting national solidarity in countries such as China, Cuba, Ethiopia, Nicaragua and the former Soviet Union. Today, such programmes are viewed as evidence that governments of developing countries are concerned to improve the lot of their most disadvantaged citizens.

The spread of democratic institutions in countries around the world, which is proceeding at a rapid pace, offers a new incentive to engage in large-scale basic education programmes for adults. In order to function well, democratic institutions require a well informed citizenry with at least basic literacy and social skills. Some observers argue that the ultimate justification of adult education is sustaining and strengthening civil society. "Its task is to support pluralism, enhancing democracy through dispersing power," writes C. Duke [19]. Put in negative terms, the absence of an educated citizenry threatens political stability by fostering marginalization and polarization and by making the task of governance more complicated. However, education alone is no guarantee of participation in political life, as some established democratic countries have found.

The newly democratic countries cannot wait for the current generation of children to pass through the school system in order to create an educated citizenry. Today's adults must make democratic institutions work now, and equipping them to do so will require substantial investment in adult basic education.

FIGURE 18. FEMALE LITERACY RATES (AGE 15+) AND MORTALITY RATES OF CHILDREN UP TO AGE 5 IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, 1995



Evening classes for students at Nairobi secretarial school (Photo: UNESCO/Dominique Roger)

Personal Development and Empowerment

As seen above, adult education programmes can be powerful instruments for promoting economic, social and political objectives. But the purpose of education must not be restricted to "fitting" human beings into the production process or into various social institutions. Education has two other important functions.

First, education equips individuals to develop and express the full richness of their particular personalities and talents in the various roles they play in society. In other words, education empowers people. A. Lind's evaluation of the national literacy programme in Namibia (see **Box D** on page 30) described the empowering nature of that project. Learners reported feelings of "coming out of darkness" and increased self-confidence and self-reliance in dealing with banks, post offices and hospitals. At the community level, Lind reported, the greater sense of self-esteem that came from literacy led learners to become more active participants in meetings and organizations. They typically expressed reactions such as, "I am now somebody and have something to say. Before I used to remain quiet and felt very stupid" [20].

Another function of education, in John Ryan's words, "is to instill in individuals the need and duty to make all aspects of life fit for human beings." Until now, adult education in the industrialized and developing countries has tended to respond to the needs of the economy, but has focused hardly at all on more social and cultural purposes.

The *World Declaration on Education for All* took note of these broader purposes of education: after reaffirming the right of individuals to have their basic learning needs met, it went on to state, "The satisfaction of those needs empowers individuals in any society and confers upon them a responsibility ... to promote the education of others, to further the cause of social justice, ... ensuring that commonly accepted humanistic values and human rights are upheld, and to work for international peace and solidarity in an interdependent world."

One innovative approach to literacy instruction that goes in this direction is REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy Through Empowering Community Techniques), started in 1993 by ACTIONAID, a British non-governmental organization, and piloted in some 100 villages in Uganda, El Salvador and Bangladesh. This approach, which builds on the theories of Brazilian educator Paolo Freire, has each literacy group develop its own learning materials using maps, calendars and diagrams that represent local situations and help the group to analyze and organize their knowledge. Using locally designed visual cards, graphics are transferred to paper, and each participant creates a book with phrases he or she has written. Evaluations of the pilot experiences suggest that this approach not only teaches people to read and write and enhances their self-esteem, but it also prompts learners to take actions at the community level to improve living conditions. Learners have taken greater control of household decisions and resources, showed greater awareness of health issues and improved the school attendance of their children [21]. ■

Conclusion

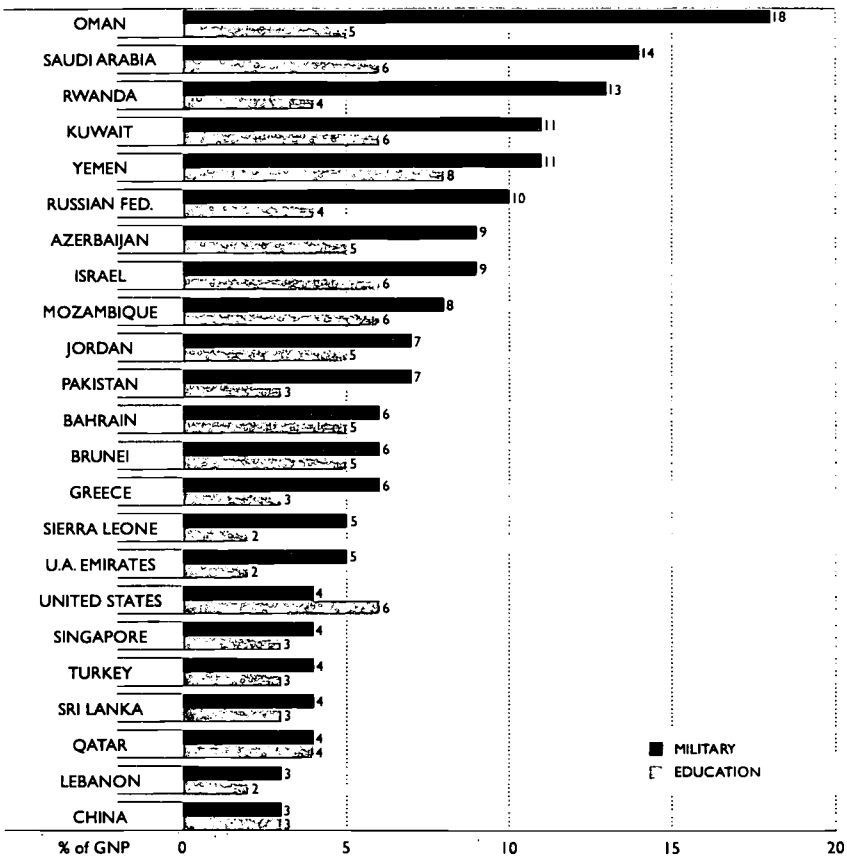
Prospects for Adult Basic Education in a Polarizing World

The preceding analysis of the trends in adult basic education contains hopeful signs. Globalization of economies, the advent of knowledge-based societies and political breakthroughs in the direction of democratic forms of government can be forces for positive change. They have the potential to bring members of the world community together, to make them more aware of each other's needs and to assist individuals and societies in addressing common concerns ranging from protection of the environment to the easing of ethnic strife. These forces also carry with them the tools by which marginalized individuals and groups can work their way into the mainstream of their societies and thereby reverse the polarizing tendencies that are apparent in many countries.

As we have seen, adult basic education can play a significant role in achieving such objectives. Through the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills, individuals can gain the tools and self-confidence to become productive workers, citizens and family members, and fulfill themselves as human beings. The importance of education as an engine of economic development means that, for the first time, countries lacking in natural resources or large amounts of capital are no longer doomed to poverty. The coming of a world where ideas have greater value than petroleum is a welcome development. The difficulty, as John Ryan notes, is that "educational resources are even less equitably distributed than natural riches."

The most challenging fact in the foregoing analysis is that there are still nearly one billion illiterate adults in the world, and the number will probably stay at this level into the next century — unless large-scale and determined efforts are made to reduce it through a combination of universal primary schooling and adult literacy activities.

FIGURE 19. PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AND THE MILITARY AS PER CENT OF GNP IN SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1994



Recent estimates of what it would cost to provide a place in school for all school-age children by the year 2000 suggest that the developing countries together would need to invest an additional US$3,000 million to US$6,000 million per year during the latter half of the 1990s. Investments of this magnitude would require substantial rethinking of the priorities embedded in government budgets. For example, spending on the military outpaces spending on education in many countries, as illustrated in Figures 19 and 20. However, Figure 21 shows that military expenditure by the donor countries as a group has actually been declining during the 1990s — along with their development aid. Considering that annual expenditures on weapons worldwide are estimated to be in the region of US$800,000 million, a mere one per cent reduction would liberate the funds needed to achieve 100 per cent primary school enrolment.

The world community and each individual country thus face a choice. They can stand by while the forces of marginalization and exclusion exact their toll on individuals and whole societies, create the seeds of conflict and anti-democratic forces, threatening the very stability of world order. Or the nations of the world can make the necessary investments to address marginalization and polarization in their many faces. Of course adult basic education is no panacea. Concerted efforts are necessary on economic, social, political and other fronts. But ensuring that all adults acquire a basic education, whether through primary schooling when they are children or through basic education programmes for adults, is an important starting point, and without gains on this front little else will be accomplished. ■

FIGURE 20. PUBLIC EXPENDITURE PER SOLDIER FOR US$100 SPENT PER STUDENT BY REGION, 1994

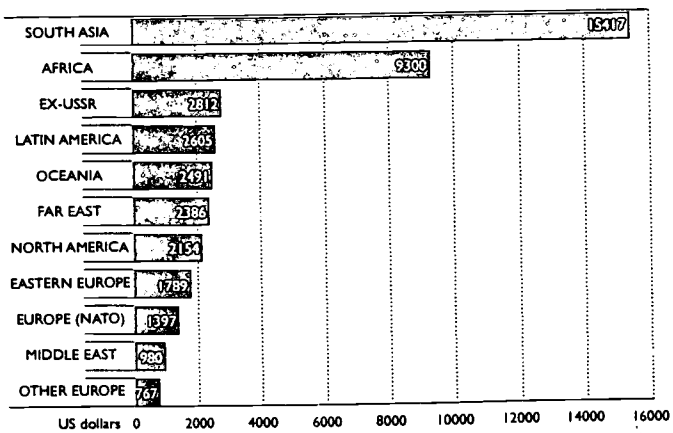
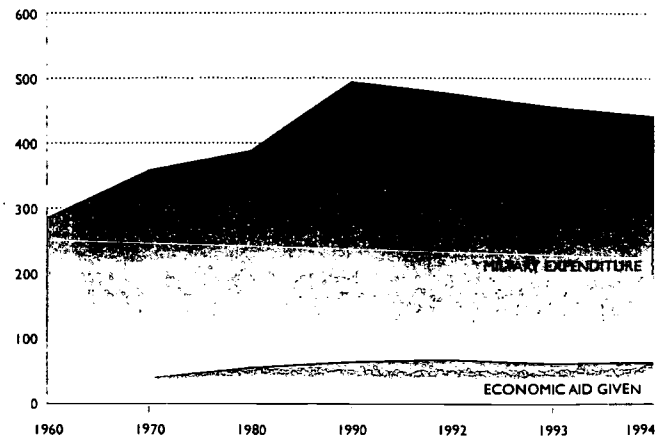


FIGURE 21. TRENDS IN MILITARY EXPENDITURE AND ECONOMIC AID BY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, 1960-1994 (1987 US$ IN BILLIONS)



STATISTICAL TABLES

Selected Educational and Socio-Economic Indicators for 132 Developing Countries and Territories

This section presents statistical data on ten selected educational and socio-economic indicators for 132 developing countries grouped by major region. All figures are from official sources, except the figures shown in yellow, which are estimates. The columns showing data for the latest year available (LYA) generally refer to 1994 or 1995, but for some countries they pertain to the early 1990s.

Data in columns 3 and 4 give a rough picture of each country's actual situation in respect to adult literacy, while columns 1 and 2 show data that could affect its evolution through the effects of primary schooling: its coverage (column 1) and efficiency (column 2). Columns 1, 3 and 4 also show disparities between the sexes.

Column 5 presents three indicotors of a country's investment in education: (i) its spending on education expressed as a percentage of its gross national product (GNP), (ii) the share of that investment spent on adult education, and (iii) the share spent on primary education. Unfortunately, data on public spending for education, especially for adult education, are not available for many countries.

Columns 6 through 10 present data on certain variables that may correlate statistically with data on education. GNP per capita (column 6) is often used as a rough measure of a country's general economic situation and hence its capacity to finance education. The Gini index (column 7) is a summary measure of equality in the distribution of income or consumption on a scale from zero to 100. Zero represents hypothetical total equality of income among households, whereas 100 represents a hypothetical concentration of all income in one household: hence the lower the value shown, the more equality in income distribution. The headings for columns 8, 9 and 10 are defined in the glossary in Annex 3.

ARAB STATES

COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES	1 NET ENROLMENT RATIO [1] %				2 PERCENTAGE [2] OF FIRST GRADERS REACHING:		3 ESTIMATED ADULT LITERACY RATES %				4 ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF ADULT ILLITERATES (THOUSANDS)				5 PUBLIC SPENDING ON EDUCATION (LYA)			6 GNP PER CAPITA $U.S.	7 INCOME DISTRIBUTION GINI INDEX	8 UNDER 5 MORTALITY RATE (PER 1000 BIRTHS)	9 FERTILITY RATE	10 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH
	1985		LYA		GRADE 4	FINAL GRADE (YEARS)	MEN		WOMEN		TOTAL	% F	TOTAL	% F	AS % OF GNP	FOR ADULT EDUCATION (%)	FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION (%)	1994	LYA	1995	1995-2000	1995
	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS			1980	1995	1980	1995	1980		1995									
ALGERIA	94	78	99	91	98	90 (6)	54.8	73.9	24.3	49.0	6103	64.0	6582	65.8				1690	38.7	61	3.8	68
BAHRAIN	94	98	99	100	95	83 (6)	79.5	89.1	60.2	79.4	63	54.0	56	55.5	4.95			7500			2.9	72
DJIBOUTI	37	26	36	28	96	94 (6)	45.3	60.3	18.1	32.7	108	61.1	181	63.8	3.77		53.4				5.4	48
EGYPT	88	67	95	82	99	98 (5)	53.9	63.6	25.5	38.8	15946	61.5	18954	62.0	5.65			710	32.0	51	3.4	65
IRAQ	99	87	83	74		(6)	55.3	70.7	25.0	45.0	4188	62.1	4848	64.6			55.8			71	5.3	67
JORDAN			89	89	98	79 (10)	82.4	93.4	53.9	79.4	464	71.1	414	74.7				1390	43.4	25	5.1	69
KUWAIT	88	85	61	61	99	99 (4)	72.8	82.2	59.1	74.9	264	48.5	200	58.6	5.62			19040		14	2.8	75
LEBANON						(5)	90.6	94.7	82.0	90.3	222	67.1	151	66.7	1.98					40	2.8	69
LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA			98	96		(9)	72.9	87.9	31.0	63.0	749	68.0	702	73.0						63	5.9	64
MAURITANIA			61	50	71	62 (6)	41.4	49.6	18.7	26.3	613	59.2	806	60.4	3.97		37.6	480	42.4	195	5.0	53
MOROCCO	73	48	81	62	83	72 (6)	42.0	56.6	16.2	31.0	7824	59.8	9730	61.8	5.38		33.0	1150	39.2	95	3.1	64
OMAN	70	63	72	70	98	94 (6)									4.48	0.49	46.7	5200		25	7.2	70
PALESTINE A.T.					100	98 (6)																
QATAR	88	94	81	80	97	92 (6)	72.0	79.2	64.8	79.9	47	36.2	82	27.1	3.46			14540			3.8	71
SAUDI ARABIA	60	42	66	59	96	91 (6)	60.2	71.5	31.7	50.2	2786	56.7	3871	55.0	6.25			7240		34	5.9	71
SOMALIA	11	6				(8)														211	7.0	48
SUDAN					94	81 (6)	43.1	57.7	17.0	34.6	7216	59.6	8507	60.9						115	4.6	54
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC	100	92	95	87	95	85 (6)	72.4	85.7	34.4	55.8	2073	69.7	2259	75.4	4.25	0.10	40.5			36	4.0	68
TUNISIA	99	87	98	95	95	87 (6)	61.1	78.6	32.3	54.6	1974	64.0	1930	67.8	6.33		41.5	1800	40.2	37	2.9	69
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	76	77	84	82	99	95 (6)	71.8	78.9	63.7	79.8	219	28.8	272	29.5	2.06					19	3.5	74
YEMEN						(9)									7.46			280		110	7.6	51

1. Yellow figures are estimates.
2. Yellow figures are calculated using the apparent cohort method.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES	1 NET ENROLMENT RATIO [1] %				2 PERCENTAGE [2] OF FIRST GRADERS REACHING: (LYA)			3 ESTIMATED ADULT LITERACY RATES %				4 ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF ADULT ILLITERATES (THOUSANDS)				5 PUBLIC SPENDING ON EDUCATION (LYA) %			6 GNP PER CAPITA $U.S.	7 INCOME DISTRIBUTION GINI INDEX	8 UNDER 5 MORTALITY RATE (PER 1000 BIRTHS)	9 FERTILITY RATE	10 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH
	1				2			3				4				5			6	7	8	9	10
	1985		LYA		GRADE 4	FINAL GRADE		MEN		WOMEN		TOTAL	% F	TOTAL	% F	AS % OF GNP	FOR ADULT EDUCATION (%)	FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION (%)	1994	LYA	1995	1995-2000	1995
	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS			(YEARS)	1980	1995	1980	1995	1980		1995									
ANGOLA					34	34	(4)										3				292	6.7	48
BENIN	71	36	69	35	71	61	(6)	28.0	48.7	9.7	25.8	1532	56.7	1792	60.2				370		142	5.8	48
BOTSWANA	84	94	94	99	91	84	(7)	70.4	80.5	43.2	59.9	207	69.6	255	69.1	8.61	1.74	31.1	2800		52	4.4	66
BURKINA FASO	29	17	35	23	87	61	(6)	18.8	29.5	4.3	9.2	3458	55.0	4597	57.1	3.59	0.37	41.7	300		164	6.6	47
BURUNDI	47	35	56	48	75	74	(6)	37.4	49.3	12.0	22.5	1740	61.7	2221	62.4	3.84		44.5	150		176	6.3	51
CAMEROON	77	67	80	69	70	58	(6)	58.9	75.0	29.7	52.1	2695	64.3	2712	66.5	2.99			680		108	5.3	57
CAPE VERDE	98	95	100	100			(6)	64.2	81.4	38.0	63.8	79	69.6	64	71.2	4.36	9.66	54.7	910			3.6	65
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	74	47	65	43	38	16	(6)	40.5	68.5	19.0	52.4	956	60.3	760	62.5	2.83		52.7	370		165	4.9	50
CHAD					39	21	(6)	46.7	62.1	19.4	34.7	1751	61.5	1868	64.3	2.17	0.55	42.1	190		152	5.5	49
COMOROS	60	51	58	48	84	76	(6)	56.0	64.2	40.0	50.4	89	58.4	143	57.9	3.74		40.8	510			5.5	56
CONGO					64	44	(6)	64.5	83.1	39.6	67.2	444	64.9	354	67.7	8.34			640		108	5.9	51
COTE D'IVOIRE					79	72	(6)	34.3	49.9	13.7	30.0	3309	54.7	4339	57.2				510	36.9	150	5.1	50
EQUATORIAL GUINEA							(5)	77.2	89.6	44.7	68.1	51	70.6	49	76.5	1.75			430			5.5	48
ERITREA			33	30	87	79	(5)														195	5.3	52
ETHIOPIA			28	19	54	51	(6)	32.1	45.5	14.0	25.3	15117	56.8	19052	57.5	4.30	1.46	53.6	130		195	7.0	49
GABON							(6)	54.3	73.7	28.0	53.3	321	62.6	295	65.1				3550		148	5.4	55
GAMBIA	77	48	64	46	87	82	(6)	37.0	52.8	12.5	24.9	278	59.0	403	62.3	5.18	0.98	42.5	360		110	5.2	46
GHANA					84	78	(6)	59.0	75.9	30.5	53.5	3286	63.7	3387	66.5	3.10	0.76	29.2	430	33.9	130	5.3	57
GUINEA	36	18			87	73	(6)	34.4	49.9	10.7	21.9	1877	58.2	2272	61.0	2.24	2.41	35.0	510	46.8	219	6.6	46
GUINEA-BISSAU	74	38					(6)	53.4	68.0	25.6	42.5	295	62.7	282	65.5				240	56.2	227	5.4	45
KENYA					78	42	(8)	72.2	86.3	44.2	70.0	3479	67.1	3237	69.0	7.03	3.16	62.4	260	57.5	90	4.9	55
LESOTHO	61	81	60	71	85	68	(7)	70.5	81.1	45.2	62.3	334	68.0	340	68.1	4.83	1.18	48.8	700	56.0	154	4.9	62
LIBERIA							(6)	38.0	53.9	11.2	22.4	787	58.4	1014	62.4						216	6.3	56
MADAGASCAR					37	28	(5)												230	43.4	164	5.7	58
MALAWI	46	41	100	100	94	91	(8)	63.9	71.9	27.8	41.8	1789	69.0	2587	68.9	3.51		55.4	140		219	6.7	45
MALI	22	13	30	19	81	61	(6)	20.2	39.4	8.7	23.1	3135	55.5	3917	57.4	2.26	0.49	47.2	250		210	6.6	47
MAURITIUS	100	100	95	96	100	99	(6)	81.6	87.1	66.5	78.8	163	65.6	138	62.4	3.74	0.02	37.7	3180		23	2.3	71
MOZAMBIQUE	56	47	44	34	58	47	(5)	44.0	57.7	12.2	23.3	4558	63.8	5298	65.5	6.34		49.8	80		275	6.1	47
NAMIBIA			86	92	86	74	(7)									8.74			2030		78	4.9	60
NIGER	32	17	29	17	83	62	(6)	13.9	20.9	2.8	6.6	2730	54.4	4081	55.3				230	36.1	210	7.1	48
NIGERIA					83	74	(6)	46.7	67.3	23.0	47.3	26229	60.2	26075	62.7				280	37.5	191	5.9	51
RWANDA	61	58	76	76	69	44	(7)	55.0	69.8	29.6	51.6	1534	62.0	1695	62.5		0.09	67.7		28.9	139	6.0	47
SAO TOME & PRINCIPE							(4)												250				67
SENEGAL	57	39	60	48			(6)	31.0	43.0	12.1	23.2	2376	56.3	3084	57.7	4.37	0.30	43.9	610	54.1	110	5.6	50
SEYCHELLES					99	99	(6)									9.76	0.73	28.2	6210				71
SIERRA LEONE							(7)	30.0	45.4	8.5	18.2	1494	58.2	1727	61.3				150		284	6.1	40
SOUTH AFRICA			95	96	77	68	(7)	76.9	81.9	74.5	81.7	4234	53.2	4731	51.0	7.06			3010	58.4	67	3.8	64
SWAZILAND	78	80	95	96	83	69	(7)	63.8	78.0	57.1	75.6	120	55.8	114	56.2	6.78	0.84	33.5	1160			4.5	58
TOGO	86	56	90	66	93	85	(6)	49.2	67.0	18.4	37.0	967	62.9	1085	66.5	6.15		31.8			128	6.1	56
UGANDA					63	40	(7)	61.8	73.7	31.7	50.2	3669	65.0	4172	66.2	1.93			320	40.8	185	7.1	44
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA	55	56	47	48	87	77	(7)	65.8	79.4	34.1	56.8	4912	67.0	5171	68.7	5.04	3.42	41.6	200	38.1	160	5.5	52
ZAIRE	81	61	71	50	83	80	(6)	74.6	86.6	45.2	67.7	5931	70.1	5184	73.0			31.7			185	6.2	52
ZAMBIA	86	81	76	75	92	78	(7)	64.7	85.6	43.2	71.3	1308	63.6	1082	68.0	2.64			350	46.2	203	5.5	48
ZIMBABWE	100	100			79	69	(7)	82.8	90.4	68.0	79.9	919	65.7	940	68.3	8.34	0.03	51.6	490	56.8	74	4.5	52

1. Yellow figures are estimates.
2. Yellow figures are calculated using the apparent cohort method.

EASTERN ASIA / OCEANIA

COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES	1 NET ENROLMENT RATIO (1) %				2 PERCENTAGE (2) OF FIRST GRADERS REACHING: (LYA)			3 ESTIMATED ADULT LITERACY RATES %				4 ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF ADULT ILLITERATES (THOUSANDS)				5 PUBLIC SPENDING ON EDUCATION (LYA) %			6 GNP PER CAPITA $U.S.	7 INCOME DISTRIBUTION GINI INDEX	8 UNDER 5 MORTALITY RATE (PER 1000 BIRTHS)	9 FERTILITY RATE	10 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH
	1985		LYA		GRADE 4	FINAL GRADE	(YEARS)	MEN		WOMEN		TOTAL	% F	TOTAL	% F	AS % OF GNP	FOR ADULT EDUCATION (%)	FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION (%)	1994	LYA	1995	1995-2000	1995
	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS				1980	1995	1980	1995	1980		1995									
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	78	78	91	91	95	91	(6)	85.7	92.6	67.8	83.4	27	63.0	22	66.7	4.60	0.23	24.1	14240			2.7	74
CAMBODIA					59	50	(5)														174	4.5	53
CHINA	95	86	99	98	95	92	(5)	78.6	89.9	52.7	72.7	218848	67.6	166173	71.9	2.56	2.78	36.8	530	37.6	47	1.8	69
COOK ISLANDS							(6)											29.8					
DEM. PEOPLE'S REP. OF KOREA							(4)																71
FIJI	97	97	99	100	87	82	(6)	87.0	93.8	78.9	89.3	66	60.6	43	63.0	5.39		50.5	2320			2.8	72
INDONESIA	100	95	99	95	92	86	(6)	77.5	89.6	57.7	78.0	28325	66.5	21507	68.5	2.22			790	31.7	75	2.6	64
KIRIBATI					91	90	(7)									7.51			730				
LAO PEOPLE'S DEM. REP.	51	40	75	61	59	53	(5)	55.6	69.4	27.7	44.4	1083	61.8	1170	65.6	2.35	3.79	42.2	320	30.4	134	6.7	52
MALAYSIA					99	96	(6)	79.6	89.1	59.7	78.1	2400	67.0	2057	66.8	6.10		33.4	3520	48.4	13	3.2	71
MONGOLIA			74	77			(3)	81.5	88.6	63.3	77.2	261	67.0	256	66.6	5.21		23.5	340		74	3.3	65
MYANMAR							(5)	85.7	88.7	68.2	77.7	4727	69.2	4913	67.1			47.7			150	3.3	59
PAPUA NEW GUINEA					67	52	(6)	70.0	81.0	45.1	62.7	737	62.4	724	64.5				1160		95	4.7	57
PHILIPPINES	97	96	100	100	74	69	(6)	90.6	95.0	88.7	94.3	2911	54.8	2234	53.1	2.97			960	40.7	53	3.6	67
REPUBLIC OF KOREA	94	95	92	94	100	100	(6)	97.4	99.3	90.1	96.7	1566	79.5	697	82.3	4.46		41.9	8220		23	1.7	
SAMOA							(8)									4.20		52.6				3.8	68
SINGAPORE	100	100	100	100			(6)	91.6	95.9	74.0	86.3	301	75.1	196	76.6	3.26		26.8	23360		6	1.8	75
SOLOMON ISLANDS					85	73	(6)									4.20	0.06	56.5	800			4.9	71
THAILAND					91	87	(6)	92.3	96.0	84.0	91.6	3297	68.2	2613	68.3	3.80	1.66	52.8	2210	46.2	32	1.7	69
TONGA					92	90	(6)									4.83		38.8	1650				
TUVALU					96	96	(8)											35.9					
VANUATU			76	72	72	53	(6)									4.82		58.1	1150				65
VIET NAM							(5)	90.0	96.5	77.6	91.2	5133	72.2	2916	73.1				190	35.7	45	2.9	66

1. Yellow figures are estimates.
2. Yellow figures are calculated using the apparent cohort method.

SOUTHERN ASIA

COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES	1 NET ENROLMENT RATIO (1) %				2 PERCENTAGE (2) OF FIRST GRADERS REACHING: (LYA)			3 ESTIMATED ADULT LITERACY RATES %				4 ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF ADULT ILLITERATES (THOUSANDS)				5 PUBLIC SPENDING ON EDUCATION (LYA) %			6 GNP PER CAPITA $U.S.	7 INCOME DISTRIBUTION GINI INDEX	8 UNDER 5 MORTALITY RATE (PER 1000 BIRTHS)	9 FERTILITY RATE	10 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH
	1985		LYA		GRADE 4	FINAL GRADE	(YEARS)	MEN		WOMEN		TOTAL	% F	TOTAL	% F	AS % OF GNP	FOR ADULT EDUCATION (%)	FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION (%)	1994	LYA	1995	1995-2000	1995
	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS				1980	1995	1980	1995	1980		1995									
AFGHANISTAN	23	11	42	15	53	37	(6)	32.6	47.2	5.7	15.0	7371	57.0	8169	60.5						257	6.9	45
BANGLADESH	64	48	66	58	60	53	(5)	41.3	49.4	17.2	26.1	33551	57.2	45082	57.7	2.32		44.2	230	28.3	115	3.1	57
BHUTAN					88	70	(7)	41.1	56.2	14.9	28.1	532	59.0	558	62.1	2.90			400		189	5.9	52
INDIA	86	65	90	74	67	62	(5)	55.3	65.5	25.3	37.7	250592	60.9	290705	62.8	3.75	0.95	38.5	310	33.8	115	3.1	62
ISLAMIC REP. OF IRAN	85	72	100	93	93	90	(5)									5.93	2.01	27.7			40	4.8	69
MALDIVES					93	93	(5)	90.6	93.3	89.2	93.0	9	55.6	9	49.2	8.09			900			6.8	
NEPAL	74	34	86	52	55	52	(5)	30.6	40.9	7.3	14.0	6784	56.3	9149	58.9	2.91	0.68	44.5	200	30.1	114	4.9	55
PAKISTAN					52	48	(5)	38.4	50.0	14.7	24.4	34575	55.6	48693	58.0	3.02			440	31.2	137	5.0	63
SRI LANKA					100	98	(5)	90.9	93.4	79.5	87.2	1410	68.3	1241	66.8	3.20			640	30.1	19	2.1	73

1. Yellow figures are estimates.
2. Yellow figures are calculated using the apparent cohort method.

LATIN AMERICA / CARIBBEAN

COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES	1 NET ENROLMENT RATIO [1] %				2 PERCENTAGE [2] OF FIRST GRADERS REACHING: (LYA)		3 ESTIMATED ADULT LITERACY RATES %				4 ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF ADULT ILLITERATES (THOUSANDS)				5 PUBLIC SPENDING ON EDUCATION (LYA) %			6 GNP PER CAPITA $U.S.	7 INCOME DISTRIBUTION GINI INDEX	8 UNDER 5 MORTALITY RATE (PER 1000 BIRTHS)	9 FERTILITY RATE	10 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH
	1985		LYA		GRADE 4	FINAL GRADE (YEARS)	MEN		WOMEN		TOTAL	% F	TOTAL	% F	AS % OF GNP	FOR ADULT EDUCATION (%)	FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION (%)	1994	LYA	1995	1995-2000	1995
	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS			1980	1995	1980	1995	1980		1995									
ANTIGUA / BARBUDA						(7)												6970				74
ARGENTINA	96	96	95	95		(7)	94.3	96.2	93.6	96.2	1185	54.2	935	51.9	3.77	1.51	50.5	8060		27	2.6	73
BAHAMAS	100	99	92	96	87	84 (6)	97.5	98.5	96.0	98.0	4	75.0	3	59.6	3.90			11790			1.9	73
BARBADOS	84	83	78	78		(7)	96.6	98.0	93.7	96.8	9	66.7	5	64.6	7.20		37.5	6530			1.7	76
BELIZE	89	85	100	98	72	60 (8)									5.69			2160			3.7	74
BOLIVIA	90	82	95	87	69	44 (8)	80.9	90.5	58.8	76.0	937	69.5	745	72.6	5.38	2.15	41.9	2550	42.0	105	4.4	60
BRAZIL	81	81	91	91	74	37 (8)	76.3	83.3	72.8	83.2	18717	54.3	18331	50.5		0.28	48.8	770	63.4	60	2.2	67
BRIT. VIRGIN ISLANDS						(7)												3370				
CHILE			88	86	93	79 (8)	92.0	95.4	90.9	95.0	634	54.1	485	53.6	2.93	0.66	58.4	3560	56.5	15	2.4	74
COLOMBIA	72	72	85	85	65	59 (5)	87.4	91.2	86.5	91.4	2080	52.8	2046	50.6	3.66		38.8	1620	51.3	36	2.7	70
COSTA RICA	83	84	87	88	92	84 (6)	91.6	94.7	91.4	95.0	118	50.8	115	48.6	4.68	0.12	39.5	2380	46.1	16	2.9	77
CUBA	91	91	96	97	94	92 (6)	91.0	96.2	87.3	95.3	716	58.2	364	55.3	6.55	1.67	30.5			10	1.5	76
DOMINICA					90	83 (7)										1.64	59.5	2830				72
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	70	69	79	83	65	52 (8)	75.3	82.0	73.5	82.2	842	51.0	908	48.8	1.93	3.33	51.4	1320	50.5	44	2.8	70
ECUADOR						(6)	85.5	92.0	78.7	88.2	815	59.6	719	59.8	3.36	0.57	32.1	1310	46.6	40	3.1	69
EL SALVADOR	63	65	78	80	64	39 (9)	66.4	73.5	59.9	69.8	904	56.2	975	55.7	1.62			1480		40	3.1	67
GRENADA						(7)												2620				71
GUATEMALA	67	60	76	70		(6)	56.3	62.5	41.0	48.6	1920	57.1	2627	57.7	1.58	0.70	55.4	1190	59.6	67	4.9	66
GUYANA			90	89		(6)	96.4	98.6	93.1	97.5	24	66.7	11	65.9	4.99			530			2.3	65
HAITI	57	54	25	26	55	39 (6)	36.2	48.0	28.9	42.2	2145	54.7	2360	54.5	1.45	1.81	53.1	220		124	4.6	58
HONDURAS	87	89	89	91		(6)	64.0	72.6	60.6	72.7	710	52.4	869	49.9	4.03	0.74	48.5	580	52.7	38	4.3	69
JAMAICA	92	95	100	100	99	89 (6)	73.2	80.8	81.1	89.1	289	42.9	254	36.5	5.32	0.28	27.7	1420	41.1	13	2.4	74
MEXICO	100	100	100	100	88	81 (6)	86.2	91.8	79.9	87.4	6452	60.6	6246	61.3	5.78	1.27	37.2	4010	50.3	32	2.7	71
NETH. ANTILLES						(6)											45.0				2.1	
NICARAGUA	74	79	85	87	65	53 (6)	61.0	64.6	60.8	66.6	574	51.2	822	51.5		1.27		330	50.3	60	3.8	68
PANAMA	90	90	91	92		(6)	86.3	91.4	84.9	90.2	157	52.2	161	52.8	5.17	2.26	30.3	2670	56.6	20	2.6	73
PARAGUAY	90	89	89	89	79	65 (6)	89.9	93.5	83.7	90.6	241	61.4	235	58.6	3.05		47.9	1570		34	4.2	71
PERU	95	92	87	87		(6)	88.8	94.5	71.0	83.0	2020	72.1	1736	75.7				1890	44.9	55	2.9	67
SAINT KITTS & NEVIS						(7)									4.08	0.13	34.7	4760				70
SAINT LUCIA					95	95 (7)									5.38	0.43	44.9	3450				72
SAINT VINCENT / GRENADINES						(7)									6.89			2120				71
SURINAME						(6)	91.5	95.1	83.8	91.0	27	66.7	19	65.9	7.16	0.26	60.4	1220			2.4	71
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	91	92	84	96	95	94 (7)	96.9	98.8	93.3	97.0	35	68.6	19	72.0	4.47	0.16	40.5	3740		20	2.1	72
URUGUAY	87	86	95	95	96	92 (6)	94.3	96.9	95.3	97.7	110	46.4	65	44.9	2.54		35.6	4650		21	2.3	73

1. Yellow figures are estimates.
2. Yellow figures are calculated using the apparent cohort method.

Annex I

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Annex 2

Composition of regions

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Angola*
Benin*
Botswana
Burkina Faso*
Burundi*
Cameroon
Cape Verde*
Central African Republic*
Chad*
Comoros*
Congo
Côte d'Ivoire
Equatorial Guinea*
Eritrea*
Ethiopia*
Gabon
Gambia*
Ghana
Guinea*
Guinea-Bissau*
Kenya
Lesotho*
Liberia*
Madagascar*
Malawi*
Mali*
Mauritius
Mozambique*
Namibia
Niger*
Nigeria
Rwanda*
Sao Tome and Principe*
Senegal
Seychelles
Siera Leone*
South Africa
Swaziland
Togo*
Uganda*
United Republic of Tanzania*
Zaire*
Zambia*
Zimbabwe

ARAB STATES

Algeria
Bahrain
Djibouti*
Egypt
Iraq
Jordan
Kuwait
Lebanon
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Mauritania*
Morocco
Oman
Qatar
Saudi Arabia
Somalia*
Sudan*
Syrian Arab Republic
Tunisia
United Arab Emirates
Yemen*

LATIN AMERICA/ CARIBBEAN

Antigua and Barbuda
Argentina
Bahamas
Barbados
Belize
Bolivia
Brazil
British Virgin Islands
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Cuba
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
El Salvador
Grenada
Guatemala
Guyana
Haiti*
Honduras
Jamaica
Mexico
Netherlands Antilles
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Puerto Rico
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Suriname
Trinidad and Tobago
Uruguay
Venezuela

EASTERN ASIA/ OCEANIA

Brunei Darussalam
Cambodia*
China
Cook Islands
Democratic People's Rep. of Korea
Fiji
Hong Kong
Indonesia
Kiribati*
Lao People's Democratic Republic*
Malaysia
Mongolia
Myanmar*
Niue
Papua New Guinea
Philippines
Republic of Korea
Samoa*
Singapore
Solomon Islands*
Thailand
Tonga
Tuvalu*
Vanuatu*
Viet Nam

SOUTHERN ASIA

Afghanistan*
Bangladesh*
Bhutan*
India
Islamic Republic of Iran
Maldives*
Nepal*
Pakistan
Sri Lanka

DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Albania
Andorra
Armenia
Australia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Belgium
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Canada
Croatia
Cyprus
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Japan
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Kazakstan
Kyrgyzstan
Malta
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
San Marino
Slovakia
Slovenia
Sweden
Switzerland
Tajikistan
Turkey
Turkmenistan
United Kingdom
Ukraine
United States
Uzbekistan
Yugoslavia

* Least developed countries

Annex 3

Glossary

Adult basic education: all forms of organized education and training that meet the basic learning needs of adults, including literacy, numeracy, general knowledge and life skills. For statistical purposes, adults are usually defined as persons aged 15 years or over.

Basic learning needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions and to continue learning.

Developed countries, also called *industrialized countries*, includes the countries of Europe, the ex-Soviet Union, Australia, Canada, Japan, Israel, New Zealand, and the United States of America.

Fertility rate: number of live births in a given year per 1,000 women in the age-group 15-49 years.

Functional literacy: a term sometimes used to distinguish the ability to use literacy skills for particular purposes in the home, community or workplace. However, it is now generally considered that true literacy must be functional and relevant to the individual's needs.

Gini index: a measure of inequality (used here in respect to the income distribution within a country) in which 100 represents complete inequality and 0 perfect equality.

Gross national product (GNP): the value of all finished goods and services produced in an economy during one year. *GNP per capita* (i.e. a country's GNP divided by the population) is often used as an indicator of a country's general wealth.

Illiteracy: a lack of mastery of the written language, usually related to a social condition of poverty, but not to be confused with ignorance.

Illiteracy rate: number of illiterate adults expressed as a percentage of the total adult population (15 years or older).

Illiterate adult: a person aged 15 years or over who cannot with understanding both read and write a short, simple statement about everyday life.

Least developed countries (LDCs) are low income countries recognized by the United Nations as encountering long-term impediments to economic growth, particularly low levels of human resource development and severe structural weaknesses. The list of LDCs gives guidance to donor countries for the allocation of foreign assistance.

Life expectancy at birth: the average number of years a newborn infant is expected to live if prevailing patterns of mortality in the country at the time of birth were to stay the same throughout his or her life.

Literacy: the ability to read and write, not only by adults, but by children and youth as well. Literacy is a continuum of reading and writing skills. Often the term is used to include also basic arithmetic skills (numeracy).

Literacy rate: number of literate adults expressed as a percentage of the total adult population (15 years or older).

Military expenditures: all public expenditure on military forces, including the purchase of military supplies and equipment; construction of facilitities; recruitment, training and maintenance of personnel; and military aid programmes.

Net enrolment ratio (NER): the number of pupils in the official school-age group expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age-group.

Non-formal education: educational activities for children, youth or adults that are organized outside the regular school system, sometimes referred to as out-of-school education.

Out-of-school children: those in the officially defined primary school-age group who are not enrolled in school, including those who dropped out.

Public spending on education as used here, refers to expenditure on educational activities by the public authorities responsible for education. It does not include expenditure for such purposes by other government departments.

School-age population: number of children in the officially defined primary school age-group, whether enrolled in school or not.

Under-5 mortality rate (U5MR): the number of deaths of children under five years of age per thousand live births during a given year.

Universal primary education (UPE): full enrolment of all children in the primary school age-group, i.e. 100 per cent net enrolment ratio.

The **INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM ON EDUCATION FOR ALL** was set up after the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, March 1990) to promote and monitor progress in the provision of basic education through the 1990s. The Forum periodically brings together senior policy-makers and specialists from developing countries, international and bilateral development agencies, and non-governmental organizations and foundations.

At its first meeting (Paris, December 1991) the Forum focused on the prospects of achieving universal primary education. At its second meeting (New Delhi, September 1993), the Forum examined the prospects of providing quality education for all (EFA). The Forum's third meeting (Amman, June 1996) reviewed overall progress towards EFA at the mid-decade, and its final communiqué outlined priorities for action during the remainder of the decade.

An inter-agency Steering Committee decides the Forum's workplan, which is carried out by the Forum Secretariat based at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, and endorses the Forum's extended programme activities, which are sponsored by two or more of the constituent organizations. During the 1995-1996 programme period, the Forum's core programme was funded by contributions from Denmark, Finland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank.

The Mid-Decade Review of progress towards Education for All constituted the Forum's principal set of activities in 1995-1996, which included:

providing guidelines to all countries in undertaking their own EFA reviews;

commissioning 20 country case studies on specific aspects of EFA;

commissioning a survey of conditions of primary schools in 14 of the poorest countries;

examining the policies and practices of donors supporting EFA;

collecting the views of major groups of non-governmental organizations on EFA;

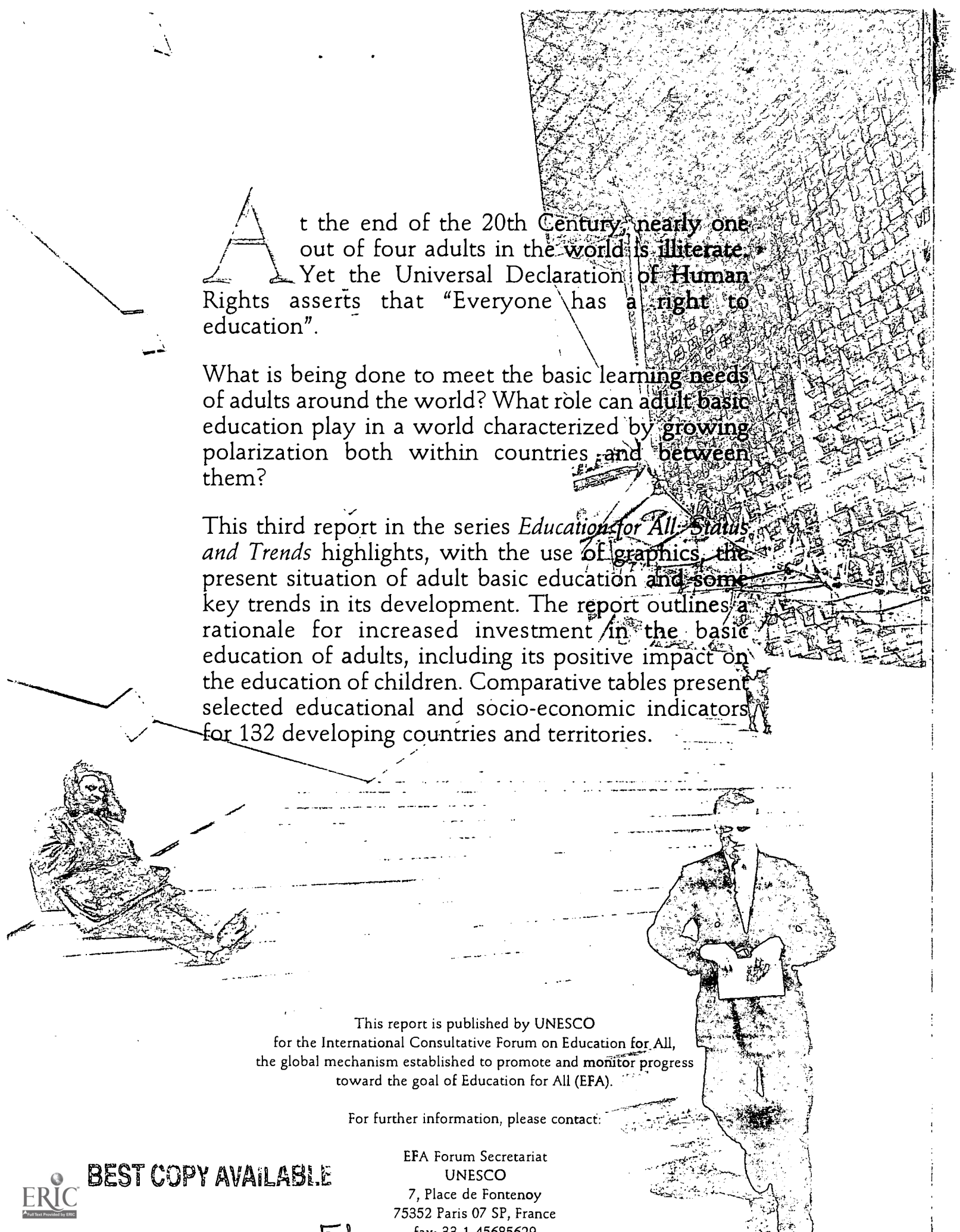
organizing seven regional EFA policy review seminars;

collecting and analyzing data on basic education in developing countries;

presenting the results of these activities to the Forum at its mid-decade meeting in Amman, Jordan, June 1996; and

publicizing the results and the main EFA issues through the media.

The Forum Secretariat also publishes the quarterly *EFA 2000 Bulletin* in five languages, a series of topical reports entitled *Education for All: Status and Trends*, as well as occasional brochures and papers.



At the end of the 20th Century, nearly one out of four adults in the world is illiterate. Yet the Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that "Everyone has a right to education".

What is being done to meet the basic learning needs of adults around the world? What role can adult basic education play in a world characterized by growing polarization both within countries and between them?

This third report in the series *Education for All: Status and Trends* highlights, with the use of graphics, the present situation of adult basic education and some key trends in its development. The report outlines a rationale for increased investment in the basic education of adults, including its positive impact on the education of children. Comparative tables present selected educational and socio-economic indicators for 132 developing countries and territories.

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